

Kuro no Maou
– The Black Demon King –

- Volume 7 -

Counter Attack Preparations

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CHAPTER 86

DISAPPEARANCE OF AN APOSTLE

Early morning, one of the Apostles had disappeared from one of the guest rooms.

“What should I do?.....”

So, once again the 7th Apostle Sariel was racking her brains.

“It, It’ll be fine. We’ll find Lord Misa soon!”

Just as the 12th Apostle Mariabelle, who tried to console Sariel for no reason, had said, the one who had disappeared was the 11th Apostle Misa.

This morning, when the sister came to her room to prepare for waking her up, there was only a scattered cushion on the large canopy bed and the god-loved girl that should have been sleeping there was nowhere to be seen.

This tragic news came to Sariel who woke up had woken up at daybreak as per the customs of the monastery.

“Currently, we have closed all the doors of the Capital Daedalus and have also sent a search party into the city as well.”

The one who had quickly taken such measures was Sariel’s aide, Archbishop Liuchrome’s work.

This meeting of Sariel with the 3 Apostles was something that had been concealed from the public and the soldiers had only been told that it was an important person.

But still, since Misa’s features were distinct, they could make do with just telling the soldiers about her characteristics and even a soldier who had never seen her directly would soon recognise her.

That is why, even with such complicated circumstances, as long as Misa was still hiding in Daedalus city, they would find her sooner or later.

But, that's only if she's still here.

"If Lord Misa has used her 'ability' then she would have already gone far away from Daedalus already."

As Sariel spoke that while sighing, the faces of the beautiful brothers cramped as if in pain.

"You're talking about [Sky Fortress – Peaceful Heart]....."

With a fed up face, Mariabelle said the name of the troublesome ability held by Misa.

"Certainly, if she is flying in the air then it's useless no matter how much we search on land. If she secluded herself in the castle here, there would be no need for her to appear either, so this must be her own whim."

The 11th Apostle Misa's [Sky Fortress – Peaceful Heart]'s effect was literally as per the name.

If she uses 'that', she can fly on the same way as the only Pegasus Knights can.

"I'll go."

Sariel proposed the only thing she could do.

Even if she was the Supreme commander, she had no ability other than going out in battles.

She knew that it was much more efficient to stay quiet and just leave everything to Liuchrome regarding accurate decision making and orders.

"I am very sorry. I had kept it in mind to not trouble Her Excellency Sariel in any case except battles but....."(Liu)

"Don't worry, Lord Misa is my guest after all."(Sariel)

Liuchrome thanked as he bowed deeply.

"By the way, Mariabelle."

“eh, what is it Nii-san?”

Due to being called suddenly, Mariabelle ended up calling him informally.

“Where is the 3rd Apostle Lord Mikael right now?”

Yes, the ones who came to visit Sariel were 3 people. The disappeared Misa, Mariabelle who was here and the beautiful [holy woman] that didn't show up even with all this ruckus, 3rd Apostle Mikael.

“aa, Lord Mikael after hearing about Lord Misa——“(maria)

.

“That's troublesome, then I shall also go and look for her ~”

.

“——is what she said.”(maria)

As if going on a morning walk, she had also left, is what Mariabelle told.

“Is there a way to contact Lord Mikael?”(Liu)

“.....aa”

Even though she said that she is going to look for her, just where is she roaming in this unknown city of Daedalus?

Thinking rationally, a normal person would have looked around the castle and returned while saying ‘I didn't find her.’ But this person was an Apostle with infinite magical energy.

If she felt like it, she could simply keep on walking till she reached the ends of the earth.

The title of [Holy woman] wasn't for just show. She could keep on worrying about the whereabouts of Misa and without even caring about herself, she could keep on walking forever to look for her.

“This might lead to a second disaster.....”

Without scolding his brother for not stopping her, Liuchrome said those heavy words as he sighed.

“I’ll search of Lord Mikael as well.”(sariel)

Really sorry, both brothers bowed towards Sariel instantly.

CHAPTER 87

DEFENCE PLAN

In the conference room on the second floor of the guild hall, Kuroono and the rest had gathered.

Not coincidentally, but because Kuroono had asked them to. Along with the 3 members of [Element Masters], Vulcan of [Vulcan Powered], Irina of the [Three Hunting Princesses], skeleton magician Mozrun aka Mossan and the slime Su-san, these 7 were sitting around a big table.

Except the members of Element master, the rest still were wondering the reason to have assembled like this.

Without minding that, Kuroono spread out a map of the western region of Daedalus on the table and spoke.

“Let’s start the strategy meeting of the [Adventurer Alliance]!”

The name ‘Adventurer Alliance, was obviously the name given to the Adventurers taking part in this Emergency Quest.

Kuroono had grandly declared the start of the strategy meeting but,

“haa?”

The reaction of rest of the members was totally cold and vacant.

“Strategy meeting? What the hell is that?”

As the representative of every dumbfounded person here, Vulcan asked Kuroono.

“Well, a strategy meeting means a strategy meeting. Everyone does that before challenging a quest as a party, right?”(kuroono)

Basically what the adventurers talked about in the guild lobbies or during meals was that.

“Well that’s because it’s a party after all. For random collection of adventurers like this, the leader takes all the decisions independently; he won’t call for the other members.”

“Is that so?”

“Of course! If you start asking the opinion of every damn person, you won’t be reaching to any conclusion after all! That’s why the strongest one becomes the leader so that nobody else gets a reason to complain!!”

Vulcan’s complaint was basically similar to how animals decide their boss, but in this Pandora continent, it was normal.

If the number is small like a Party then coordinating is easy, but in cases like this where various people gather of different races and abilities, it’s best to leave it to the strongest guy to control and govern them all as Vulcan had said.

This wasn’t a peaceful land like Kurono’s Japan. Not to mention that the adventurers were mostly a gathering of rowdy ruffians. So, it was pretty much impossible to have every one peacefully listen to each other.

But, even Kurono had understood that during his 3 months as an adventurer.

Still he had proposed a strategy meeting.

“Although what Vulcan is saying is reasonable but I, a rank 1 adventurer, am still not very experienced. I’m not even well versed with the geography of this area either. Whether the plan I think is executable or not, what can each and every do and cannot, if all this is not something within my knowledge, I won’t be able to come up with an effective plan. Asking others for opinion might seem pathetic to other adventurers but I need everyone’s strength. Can you think of this as helping me and cooperate?”

On Kurono’s straight call for cooperation, the hall was completely silent.

But that silence was soon broken.

“Isn’t it fine? If the leader is asking for our knowledge then we should simply properly respond his request.”

The first one to accept the proposal was Irina.

“yeah, let’s think of all 50 here as a single party! Well, I myself am a solo guy though! Ahhahha!”

“I also agree. Kurono-san isn’t a simple minded guy it seems. He should be able to integrate every opinion properly.”

Mozrun and Su-san also gave their agreements.

Vulcan was the only one with a bitter expression but he was also, at the end, a good guy, he also didn’t mope around too much.

“Can’t be helped, we should look after our inexperienced Leader after all!”(Vulcan)

“ Thanks, that saved me the trouble. As Mossan said, lets think of all us as a single paty and complete this quest together.”

Kurono relaxed after everyone decided to help.

It seems that yesterday’s battle against the scout troop had earned him proper trust from others.

Everyone here, except the 3 from Element Master, were famous in the area for their abilities. If he got their help, it would be easier to cooperate with the other adventurers as well.

Due to Kurono asking them for their proper cooperation, it could be said the Adventurer Alliance increased its solidarity by 1 level.

“So, what are we here to decide? Something like that Scorched earth tactic you used yesterday?”

“That was just a mere trick to slow down the enemy; it’s not a tactic to properly stop them.”

Although it was a trick, it needed to be done as quickly as possible so Kurono had postponed the meeting till today and had gone to Irz Village yesterday.

“Stop them? Is there any other way except fighting?”

“Yeah, aren’t we going to lie in wait for them here in the sturdy gates of Kuar?”

Normally thinking, that was the only way.

In the first place, the people of Pandora didn't put much emphasis on tactics and strategies.

Thus, in cases of battling with large numbers, they only thought about the division between rear guard and vanguard and also finding a spacious place to fight properly.

"No, that won't work."

But, Kurono thought.

Kurono Maou who was a part of the literature club and was someone who aimed to mass produce those painful chuuni novels as a high schooler, he was much more knowledgeable about [Battles] than others.

Of course, that knowledge was something only that could satisfy an intellectual, but whether he could apply it in reality would be a totally different matter.

Although, even Kurono doesn't expect these tactics to show 100% effect as shown in text books and heroic legends.

After risking his life countless times in battles, he even doubted that these were only optimistic theories that would only work in his own fantasy.

But again, Kurono didn't have anything else to rely on either.

A boy of only 17 yrs old, the experience of such cases he had was almost nil after all. Especially in cases involving 'tactics'.

If these adventurers had actual proper strategies and tactics, Kurono would not have even meddled like this.

But as expected, to execute these tactics, he needed the advice of the veterans of this world.

Kurono wasn't very confident regarding his own strategy but, without showing that on his face, he started to explain it.

"We'll abandon Kuar. Our defensive line will be——"

Kurono's finger pointed towards a point on the map.

"Daedalus' westernmost village of Alzas."

Alzas village was a village that existed alongside the giant Rone river that flowed from the Gallahad mountain ranges. It was a village of the same size as Irz.

It had the Rone river on its east side where the main gate was, and a tributary called Haren by its west side which had the back gate of the village. It was like a small island between 2 rivers.

"Using the Adventurer Guild on the banks of Rone river as the fortress, we'll stop the Crusaders at the front gate of Alzas."

"Why does it have to be there? The walls and gate surrounding Kuar are better. And the guild of Alzas is not especially sturdy either."

Irina had gone to Alzas it seems, but Kurono had not.

But Kurono's impression that Alzas had the same level of facilities as Irz was proven true by her explanation.

"What's more important is the terrain rather than the facilities. By that, I am talking about the big river that'll be in front of us. I'll ask this just in case, but does anyone here has any experience in fighting army troops?"(kurono)

Except Fiona, who was an ex-merc, nobody raised their hands.

These guys were adventurers, not soldiers after all, so it wasn't really surprising.

"Rank 4 adventurers should have plenty of experience fighting monsters like goblins who fight in large groups, right? But the Crusaders aren't on the level of those wild monsters. They have huge numbers and are also highly trained making them able to use coordinated attacks."

Last night, Fiona explained Kurono about the difference between the armies of Daedalus and Syncrea Republic.

Human armies have the knowledge regarding, chain of commands, strategies, formations etc. from a long period of time.

But on the other hand, demon armies left everything to individual strength and only acted as a one large group under a single boss.

As Kurono wondered whether to fight on the plains (Kuar) or to use the rivers (Alzas), he realized that he himself wasn't very experienced in fighting in big groups and organisations.

"As the individual strength got stronger, they could easily handle weak monsters who were large in numbers but that won't work with a human army. No matter how strong they are, if they were attacked after being surrounded by 100 or 1000 soldiers, they'll face the same end as a rank 1 adventurer surrounded and tortured to death by goblins.

Basically, if only 50 of us fought in a place as wide as Kuar village, we'll be surrounded and annihilated by the enemy army."

Although Kuar had a pretty sturdy wall so they won't lose instantly, but the result will still be the same as what Kurono meant.

"Humans don't have any special abilities as compared to other races so we can limit their movements a lot with simply rivers."

There were races like the lizardmen and Mermaids that won't be deterred by something like rivers, but the opponents were only humans.

"Attacking an enemy as they are defenceless while crossing the river is a basic strategy."

"fuun, well leading the enemy towards an advantageous terrain is something everyone does. Also, if the enemy will come directly from the highway then there were no troubles like leading and baiting them there like monsters."

"Even a roughly gathered group of adventurers can at least perform a proper ambush."

"Exactly. Then I'll tell the more specific details regarding this now. Which one of them can be done and who will do them is what we need to decide now. Unfortunately, we don't have the time to discuss it at ease. Let's quickly wrap things up here and get to work!"(kurono)

CHAPTER 88

ALSACE VILLAGE

If you go in series, the villages along the north-west highway starting from Irz Village, then there are Irz Village, Kuar Village, Hejito Village, Vato Village and in the westernmost part is the Alsace Village.

Kurono along with the 20 adventurers he selected, were heading towards Alsace Village which would become their defense lines.

With the adventurers from Hejito and Vato Village, when added with the adventurers from Alsace. The adventurer alliance will have 103 adventurers in total.

Since a messenger was sent for informing every village from Kuar Village about the emergency situation, so it didn't take much time for Lily to convince the heads as it did with Nahad.

And there was no opposition for Kurono being the leader of the alliance, due to the most famous 'Vulcan Powered' along with other rank 4 parties working with him. Every adventurer was silently, without any objections accepting his commands.

There is a problem but it was not the adventurers

"Why are you in Alsace!? Adventurers should be at the rear guard right!!"

Just like Kurono became the leader of adventurers, Nachim became the leader of the alliance of vigilante corps from every village.

As Kurono walked a step into the adventurer guild of Alsace, Nachim's voice resounded in the whole lobby.

"Ah, maybe you were frightened and run awa—"

Just like that he spoke insulting words to Kurono with no place to intercept him

[[Shut up annoying bastard, I will wait 10 seconds get lost within that time.]](Lily)

Lily spoke those words in the mind of Nachim using Telepathy.

“Y-Yes, well then adieu, Lily-san!” [ET: Creepy]

Nachim showing somewhat happy expression, left the guild.

“Doesn’t it look like, he resents me a lot for some reason?”

“Ufufu, that might be true.”

“What did you ‘say’ to him, Lily?”

He had already guessed the reason, why Nachim suddenly changed his attitude and left.

“Un, We don’t have much time to deal with him, so I politely asked him to leave” [ET: Was just too polite , (lol)]

“I see, Thank you”

He still didn’t know what line Nachim had heard in his mind.

“But, if it will be bad, not having a good cooperation with vigilante corps alliance too, I will talk to them about it sometime.”

The work of adventurers is to guard the rear, and buy time by intercepting the enemy that appear from behind.

In regards for, vigilante corps their work was to escort the refugees and maintaining security and public order.

Basically, both parties are not to meet with each other, but till the time refugees were to leave Alsace, it is only natural to avoid having discord and creating needless trouble.

“Well it is good, for now we have to talk with the guild master from here and ask him for us to help him fortification of guild.”

Kurono started walking towards the conference room, the guild master might be waiting in to complete his purpose for coming to Alsace.

The evacuation of refugees, is for now going without any hindrances.

That is because the highway from Irz~Alsace is well maintained, so it is not a problem for a large number of people to walk on it. And the distance between every village is also at most 1 day walk.

However, the journey from here to Spada won't be so easy as it was.

The highway connecting Alsace and Spada along the national border is not maintained well and also has bad footing. Furthermore, due to it being away from places human live, the frequency of monsters popping out for food is more. [ET: You can understand what sort of food? Obviously, popsicles.]

From here onwards there is no other village to rest after 1 day of walking, so there is a need for camping.

When camping, the preparations and set-up must be completed before sunset.

That is because, they will have to secure the safe places and water sources near the camping ground, they also have to find the suitable terrain for the tent to be placed and much more reasons and will also take time. So , if they will start setting-up and preparations from evening, they won't make it in time.

Till now they had villages nearby so they could walk till the evening, but from now on the walking time will have to be drastically lowered.

Under these situations, every human will need to walk 20 kilometres at average per day.

Even this distance of 20 kilometres will be reduced because of children, elder people and sick people.

As a matter of fact, no one knows how much time will they should buy for them to run away from Crusaders.

Kurono is being cornered by the fact that he has to stop Crusaders tracks by even 1 minute 1 second.

And, that plan is the defense plan he had thought of in the guild of Kuar Village few days ago.

“—and that’s how it is. The adventurers alliance is thinking of gaining time for the evacuation to complete and so they will spread the line of defense here.”

Inside the conference room inside the adventurer guild of Alsace village, Kurono is telling the outline of defense plan to the guild master, Bean.

The middle aged dwarf, Bean, while stroking his thick beard answered a pleasant reply.

“Fumu, Fumu, Understood, we will help, so just say the things you want.”

“Thank you very much”

“But still, you really think of turning this worn-out guild into a fortress? We can give compensation to some extent, but since this is originally a wooden structure, so I doubt it will have the sturdiness of a fundamental fortress”

Beans speaks logical words, but Kurono assures him while adding what he said.

“It is alright, I will make this guild as hard as a common stone in one night.”

“Interesting, looks like you have some sort of plans”

“Yes, but it is also needed to protect the surrounding areas of guild. I would like the people who can do carpentering and construction works for fortifying this guild.”

There are many high rank adventurers, but there are not even one with the skills of construction or carpenting.

A person who can supervise the construction is naturally needed, in other words, an combat engineer.

“I myself am a dwarf, and I know many people who are good in those areas, you can leave that work to us.”

Bean accepts Kurono’s requests with a quick and pleasant reply.

Maybe, due to him being a Guild Master he didn’t show any sign of worrying about his evacuation being late than others due to his cooperation in the fortification.

Maybe this is the way an adult behaves, Kurono was almost about to salute to him without a second thought. [ET: Though he didn't]

“Thank you very much. It's just that the the main force of enemy will reach here at the very least, in 3 days.”

That is because it took exact 3 days for Kurono to reach here from Kuar Village.

It took 3 days for the horse riding adventurers to reach here, so if the enemy also came in the same method, it would take the same amount of time.

It is hard to imagine for them to leave the foot soldiers and just burst in with cavalrymen, but that might happen.

“After 3 days pass, the enemy can burst in at any time.”

They have to at all costs complete the minimum defense preparation in just 3 days.

Bean understood Kurono's reasonings, and once again replies with a pleasant answer but this time in a loud voice.

“Very well, we will change this Alsace Village into an impregnable big stronghold by the 28th day of Shinyou.”

CHAPTER 89

COUNTERATTACK PREPARATIONS (1)

The construction of the fortification of the guild building started from that day only.

Apart from the adventurers inside the guild, the dwarfs called out by Guildmaster Bean had assembled and were already working on fortification.

It is not the work of Kurono to supervise small matters on the site, but due to the equipment being made, he himself gives out some demands.

The following are the demands given by him.

1. Reinforcement of Rhone River embankment.

They, from the get go, didn't have enough time, manpower, and materials for making a completely new protective wall. This left them with no choice but to use the things they can get their hands on.

The embankment is a flood control structure made up by piling up sand and earth, therefore it's sturdiness was far more than that of fence of wood.

So they will use some methods to change it into a protective wall.

But still, it is after all an embankment of a small village, so it's forbidden to have high expectations of very high wall.

Furthermore, though the foundation is an embankment, on it's top are the fence of wood. The trees covering Alsace were disassembled and then constructed a new fence of embankment.

The lack of time and materials is just as above mentioned. Though this is a little unreliable, but it couldn't be helped as this was the most they had.

By the way, the reason for why defensive magic is not used to replace defensive walls, is due to their limited time of effect.

It is easy to make up a tall and solid defensive wall with defensive magic the moment it is activated, but it would start deteriorating in little time and it would be impossible to maintain its shape.

To create the 24×7 hours running barrier just like the one near Daedalus's castle walls. It would need time, engineering skills, and equipment. The same things that Kurono and others were lacking.

And so, they have no choice to start making fence from scratch. Though it is classical but it ensures good defense.

2. Make an underground escape passage right beneath the Guild.

This will serve as an escape route and supply line too.

Kurono doesn't have in the least intention to let other adventurers die as 'sacrificial pieces'. He intends to return alive with everyone, so it is natural to secure an escape route.

This work will not take more than 3 days, it will be more better to call it trench rather than tunnel. This was also ascertained after the first look at plan.

And, with more than 100 adventurers stationed here, it is indispensable to secure a route for the supply of food and water.

Kurono alone can work for 1 whole week without sleeping, eating or drinking (Only if his magic doesn't run out). But the same can't be said for others.

If there are not enough replenishments, the morale of troops will only fall, this is furthermore important when there is only a cooperative relationship.

3. Remodelling of Guild's interior for easier movement.

This is to destroy the walls and ceilings which will be hindrance at the time of battle to resupply men and goods.

Those three are the demands he has given till now, but

"There isn't much material for protective wall."

this problem occurred almost really fast.

Bean was tracing the the line given by Kurono on the map. That line will be the position of protective wall.

“We are a very small village just as it looks. We don’t have enough timber, stone and other materials as such. And to make matters worse, we don’t have enough time, so we won’t able to cover a large area too.”

“Because of that problem, I would like you to make this.”

Kurono takes out a single wire from the shadow space.

It’s length is 30 centimetres, one could understand it is made from some sort of dark grey metal due to its lustre.

If it was just that much it won’t be much unusual, steel wire were used as bundling material, to create traps for animals and many other things. It can be found in any blacksmith’s workshop.

But the wire taken about by Kurono has a thorn like substance covering it. It is easily understandable that the wire is not any normal wire.

“What is that thing? A wire with a horn attached to it?”

“Yes, it is called as ‘barbed wire’. Just like it sounds, this is a normal wire with thorn attached to it.”

But, Kurono bends forward and puts the barbed wire on the table.

“Against a human, it will definitely work as a hindrance. Though it might not have any effect on lizardman and golem or any other race with hard scales and skin.”

Not only Kurono, but every person living in modern era had seen barbed wire on daily basis.

It is placed on the fences around the private properties or off-limit areas to prevent intruders from entering. This thing can be understood by this world’s people if they saw a barbed wire, without explaining it to them.

First of all it is made from iron, so maybe even if it had been developed, the popularization might have been slow.

“Fumu, I see, really if we lay this out, we can cover more extensive range without having the trouble of creating fence of trees.”

Along with that, if it is wrapped around the fence already made, it will definitely give more defensive effect and no one would touch it without thinking twice.

“If only we have iron, we will can make them and use them by wrapping them. Tomorrow the previously requested bundle of iron might come, we will make use of it and use the barbed wire as a barricade.”

“Got it, let’s complete it fast.”

Bean who understood its effectiveness, nods.

“But, will it be able to block those wearing thick whole body armor?”

“The normal attire of Crusaders is chainmail under a white surcoat. This will be able to block many cavalymen and foot soldiers.

But even barbed is not all-purpose. They might have people who can jump over them, aren’t I right?

but dealing with people like those is the job of us adventurers.”

.

While Kurono was near some steps from the construction of fortress, on the other side the members of ‘Vulcan Powered’ were roaming through the Fairy Garden.

“It is hot.....”

Vulcan grumbles.

But that is not because of him being weak. It is natural for a beat man to complain about heat walking under the sunlight during mid-summer while wearing natural thick fur as surcoats.

As all the party members are beast men, so they have got no choice but to keep on walking while having the same problem as Vulcan.

“Will it really.....go easily like this?”

The other main reason for them to be sweating from head to toe was because they are wearing the Crusader's cross and white surcoats. In short, disguise.

As for what reason this was needed. Kurono ordered them that this was a continuation of scorched earth tactics. The Plan Part 2 a.k.a 'MPK Plan'. [ET: Should I say Kurono became a Chuuni][SK: He always was a chuuni.]

In this world which doesn't has any english alphabets, the words 'MPK' were being misunderstood by everyone as a single word except Kurono.

“To hell with MPK, if this doesn't work I'm gonna blast off Kurono's ass.”

By the way, the surcoats all the members are wearing are hundred percent real, they were taken off the corpses of dead soldiers after all, but their was no size fitting for Vulcan, so he had surcoat made by order in guild by sewing up white sheets together and embroidering a cross emblem on to it.

The surcoat Vulcan wore is made of more thick cloth than normal ones, so he was melting in the heat more than other members.

“Everyone halt! Target discovered!”

The voice of the beast man archer with good eyes resounds.

“Is that so, then let's wrap this up fast and return back to Hejito Village.”

Vulcan's hand reaches for the hilt of his broad word. In front of his eyes, was the settlement of the famous rank 1 monster 'Goblin'.

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On the other hand, the rank 4 thief Su-san a.k.a Suusu, was climbing on the cliff of Galahad mountain range, which Kurono climbed while having lily on his back with great deal of effort.

“He really gives some ‘absurd’ quests.”

A gust of winds blows towards Suusu, clinging on the rock cliff, which caused her white surcoat to flutter relentlessly.

But, she changes the tips of her legs and hands to the slime like jelly parts and grips the vertical wall with unbelievable grip power. She shows absolutely no fear.

She without separating her hands and legs, starts crawling on the cliff, like a slime.
[ET:Wow.....]

“Well then, a little left till the destination. I need to work more hard to not lose to others!”

The place she is heading to is the nest of rank 4 monster ‘Garuda’.

And for this quest only she, with best espionage abilities, will be able to complete.

.

The three elves sisters from ‘Three Hunting Princesses’ were hiding themselves in the forest along the north-west highway. They are also in charge of reconnaissance mission.

“Whoa, the queue is still walking.....there really are many of them.”

The third sister Hanna who looks at the queue of Crusaders, once again recognises the vast armies of their enemies.

The Crusaders wearing white surcoats with the design of cross, and holding flags with the same design, are marching in a well-ordered manner while matching each other’s pace.

The spears of foot soldiers is lined, and in front of them are the cavalrymen covered in silver heavy armor and are walking boldly.

“I have only seen the army of daedalus as big as of this scale.”

The second sister Laura, recalls the commemoration parade of Daedalus army she once watched.

The bright white attired Crusaders are a complete contrast to Daedalus army wearing jet black armor and helmet.

The three are reminded of the fact that these white attired troops are the ones who defeated daedalus army and are now walking boldly in the territory of daedalus.

“Look above over there neesan!”

On Hanna’s word Irina and Laura raise up their heads, and see many shadows in the mid-air.

“Pegasus Knight!? They even have this.....really troublesome these peeps.....”

Seeing many pegasus knights leisurely flying, even Irina who always is calm couldn’t hide her amazement.

As riding animals pegasus are more effective than horses, and the techniques used to control pegasus to fly in sky can’t be compared to that of horse-riding.

Though becoming a pegasus knight is time and money taking, but to compensate for those disadvantages, the pegasus can fly high and are agile.

Furthermore, the pegasus riders are not cheap and easily available to any country, but having a whole troop of them means that particular country is a lot powerful.

Irina was feeling sense of danger upon seeing the opponents mightiness, powerful pegasus soldiers and they had to eventually fight.

“The people who attacked Irz before and the annihilated scout party were only a small part of them. Just like Kurono said, the enemy has high grade equipment and a lot of soldiers too.”

“Will we really have to fight that?”

“This time it is really dangerous”

“But—”

Irina smiles while facing the two sisters showing uneasiness.

Even she is scared and is feeling uneasiness, but she crushes it to death and makes a gentle expressions as always.

“We can’t abandon the villagers. And haven’t we crossed paths with danger a lot of time, we will be fine this time too. Let’s complete this emergency quest.” [ET: Feeling sentimental on this line. But who know what their fate is]

On the words of Irina, both sisters forcefully nod.

In the first place the person who runs away before even fighting just due to opponent’s numbers can never become Rank 3 adventurer.

The ‘Three Hunting Princesses’ are there because they have finished many difficulties and have faced with danger many times.

“Well, let’s get going back already. The pegasus are keeping an eye on surroundings so we will have to take a detour from inside the forest. Is that alright?”

“”Yes, Nee-san””

The three elves completely dissipate their presence and disappear in the gloomy forest.

CHAPTER 90

COUNTER ATTACK PREPARATIONS (2)

On one side, the adventurers were completing their roles at various places while Lily and Fiona were also preparing in one of the rooms of the guild.

「الان تعاش ت تبع مشرقه الشر الظلام طرد الان تعاش ت تبع」

Lily's chant resounded inside the room and a magic circle was deployed with her as the centre.

As she kept chanting, the container in front of her that had white powder till the brim started to faintly glitter.

“.....”

Although she was in her child form, Fiona watched as Lily showed the concentration level of a master craftsman.

In contrast to Lily who was using magic to the extent of getting a sweaty forehead, Fiona was doing a simple job of grinding medicinal plants with an even more sleepy expression than usual.

「——!! الان تعاش ت تبع مشرقه الشر الظلام طرد الان تعاش ت تبع」

The magic circle gave off a brighter light for a second and then it vanished.

It seemed as the magic effect was shown as Lily stretched her short limbs and ‘fuu-‘ took a breath.

“Is it finished?”

Fiona asked Lily as she took a nap.

“nn, Not yet. There's still one last touch left.”

Lily answered with an energetic voice even though her small face looked tired and was sweaty.

Fiona impolitely thought that 'her child version really looked cute' as she saw Lily

"I see. Then you'll have to return to your actual appearance as well."

"Yes, Lily will work hard!" (T/N: Lily talks in 3rd person sometimes if had forgotten)

Fiona once again had impolite thoughts like 'So I can only see her like this now, her normal form is wicked and mean after all'.

"I'll also be done soon. This seems to be the last bundle of Rixei grass. There's nothing else to help with, so till then I'll work on creating 'normal' potions."(Fiona)

What they were creating right now was not something 'normal' but 'special' it seems.

It was the [Fairy's Miracle Drug] that Lily had been selling for over the past 30 years.

Till now it had been used only to treat diseases but after using Lily's extra magic on it as well, it became effective enough to stop bleedings and close wounds as well.

They were going to fight Crusaders next, they needed as many medicines as they could have.

Currently in the 3 days of time that Kurono predicted, they were focusing on mass producing healing and medicinal potions.

Among such potions, Lily's miracle drug that was much more effective than the potions sold in market had been given the max priority and finding the materials for it was made an important job.

"If only I could use healing magic as well..... "

Lily didn't hear Fiona's mutterings, but it was a fact that Fiona was looking at Lily, on whom everyone relied on, with a slight bit of envy.

If she could use healing magic instead of her destructive attack magic, she would have not been ostracized by others and could have been useful to others as well. Fiona realized that her thinking was useless so she quickly cut her train of thoughts.

“I’m now a member of Element Master. Kurono-san and Lily-san approved of me. That’s more than enough.”

Although she was still a bit restless, Kurono and Lily had accepted her better than anyone else till now after all.

“Also, I at least know the proper method to make potions.”(Fiona)

Fiona changed her track of thoughts, and thought about the various medicinal plants, medicines, and the knowledge regarding healing magic in her mind.

Actually, in this world, healing magic was of 2 types.

[Heal] that gave temporary effects and [Cure] that accelerated the natural healing rate and completely restored injuries.

Any magic that had the effect of treating wounds was called as [Healing Magic] generally, so [Heal] type magics were also correctly classified under this type.

It was common sense for the people of this world but Kurono whose image of ‘Restorative Magic’ rooted from RPGs, it took him one month in Irz before he realized the difference.

For example, if someone got cut by the knife of a goblin, everyone would choose to use [Heal] type magic.

If the arm was cut then they could use a low level [Heal] to close the wound instantly.

However, [Cure] type magic does not close the wound instantly.

In a battle where a person hangs between life and death, immediate healing, even if temporary, was priceless. But, in the end, the effect will be temporary. Once the magical energy put inside the Magic depletes, the wound will start opening again.

If it was only a one time battle, then one could treat the wound appropriately later and rest while it heals naturally. However a soldier or an adventurer cannot do that.

Thus, to completely recover from an injury faster than normal, [Cure] is used.

In this world, wounds cannot be healed by using magic once like in a game but, in treatment of external wounds, they were still faster than the medicines of the modern world.

And it could be said the same for the Potions as well.

Naturally, Potions also have the [heal] types and [Cure] types.

Adventurers, who don't have a healer, use both these potions when on a quest.

By the way, there is an all-purpose medicine that holds the abilities of both [Heal] and [Cure].

That is the Fairy's miracle drug.

Lily had been selling it to the villagers at a very cheap affordable price till now, but if sold through proper routes, it was even costlier than 1 gold coin.

It was such an expensive medicine but it was doubtful whether Lily herself was aware of that.

"Alright, next!"

Lily lifted from the floor by flapping her wings and jumped on the top of the big table.

There, along with the grinded medicinal plants made by Fiona, all sorts of raw materials and ingredients were kept.

From here onwards, Lily would apply her secret recipe for compounding.

If it was a normal potion, Fiona, who had gone to a magic school, could also make but in this case where Lily made the medicine using her Extra magic, Fiona could not help with anything else than collecting the ingredients.

Lily would be burned and tired by using a lot of concentration and magical energy required for compounding but since she was the only one could make it, it couldn't be helped.

Not to mention that she had to complete it in 3 days instead of her usual time of 1 month.

If she could not turn into her original form, she could not complete the miracle drug either.

In her terms 'the final push' meant using magic that she could not use in her child form.

Normally, it would have been impossible since there was no full moon night in these 3 days but as long as Lily had the [Queen Beryl], she could do something unreasonable as that in a short time span.

"n ~ mumumu....."

Holding the container in her both hands, she started compounding with a serious look in her eyes.

("She's compounding without even weighing them?could she really do it like that? No, if it's her she probably can.")(Fiona)

Without even taking exact measurements, Lily who had been mixing things as if on a whim only looked like a child playing house.

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As the sun started sinking, and the sky turned red, even then the workers working on the fortification of the main gate didn't seem to disperse.

They only had 3 days to complete the work, so it was obvious they decided to use the high priced oil to work even at nights.

And of course, the leader, Kurono also continued working as well or rather he started to prepare for the work that will take the whole night.

"n ~, well, it's something like this."

"Much appreciated. Next is my job."(kurono)

Behind the guild were Mozrun and Kuro, the darkness combination of the black magician and the dark magician.

These two had similar magic properties so they used to work together most of the times.

Especially Kuro who devoted himself to developing new black magics always, he has been taking lessons from Mozrun regarding dark magic.

“Then, my job here is done.”(mozrun)

Facing the wall, Mozrun released black wriggly tentacle like substances from within his robe. They climbed the walls of the guild and made a magic circle on the white wall with a black ink like colour.

As Mozrun had said, the magic circle had been completed and soon the black tentacles disappeared like the mist.

“Man I’m tired. It was really troublesome to cover the wall in just half day.”(Mozrun)

Mozrun had created black magic circles on all the walls of the guild in just half a day.

Its effect was simple. To enhance the element of darkness, that’s it.

But, because [Eternity] property was included to avoid the extinguishment of magical energy, the spell and technique were extremely high level.

“But, I wonder if it’s possible——“

He had shown his skills as a rank4 magician but,

“—to cover the whole guild building with enhancement boost.”

The plan Kuro had given to enhance the guild was truly doubtful.

A magic to enhance and fortify a building was definitely possible but it would take the same time and effort as the carpenters who built it took and will require a lot of magicians to do ‘remodelling work’ at a large scale together.

The barrier deployed along the walls of Daedalus was a perfect example of it.

According to the common sense of magicians, to apply a defensive enhancement to a 4 storey building like the guild building, it would require 5 rank 3 magicians to work for a whole week.

But Kurono said that he would do it alone that too in a single night.

It was natural for Mozrun to be doubtful. He felt it would be amazing if he could cover half of the building in 3 days.

“It’ll be fine. If it’s just enhancing the walls, I’ll manage it somehow.”

But Mozrun did not speak his doubts. He decided to believe in his leader’s strong words and see how things turn out.

“I’ll look forward to it, work hard Boss Kurono.”

While waving his skeletal hand, Mozrun left.

Kurono who was left alone spread his arms towards the black magic circle.

“—-amazing.”

He could instantly feel black magical energy activating just from touching.

“Let’s do this—-[Blackening].”

To enhance his weapons and swords, as well as use them without touching was [Blackening]. It was a magic that he had learnt even before he left that facility. He had a lot of memories of using this magic in various situations like in his fight against Sarel, or when he opened the treasure box etc. And probably, enhancing this whole building will also become another one of those memories.

The most common effect of Kurono’s blackening was the enhancement of the material.

Basically, just as how he strengthened his swords, he wanted to enhance and strengthen the whole wooden structure through blackening.

But, to complete blackening he had to cover the object completely with his magical energy. And the bigger the object, the more the consumption of magic will be.

And this time, the object was not a small box or sword, but a 4 storey giant building. The magical energy consumption will be higher than anything, even higher than the time when the cursed hatchet evolved.

(“But, if I do this slowly through the whole night, I’ll definitely be successful.”)

After weighing the consumption rate with his energy recovery rate, it was certainly possible but only theoretically.

Even if the black magical energy recovered with time, the concentration and patience required to use it continuously will definitely fall.

(“Basically, it depends on my guts!!”)

Thus, Kurono’s long night had started.

CHAPTER 91

OCCUPATION OF IRZ

Although there were irregularities like the annihilation of Kievan's squad and the scout troop, the crusaders finally occupied Irz on the 25th of the month of Shinyou.

The main army moved only after long and detailed reconnaissance due to which it took so much time.

"They have completely escaped."

It was only natural. Although Norz had no proof that the villagers had all evacuated and moving towards Spada, he had still predicted it more or less.

Norz had further predicted even worse things.

"Not just the villagers, provisions, commodities, anything valuable have already been lost."

His aide, Sister Sylvia's report only substantiated it.

In the first place, it was clear that the adventurers were using Scorched Earth tactics just from the fact that the adventurer guild had been burned down.

"Tch, damned demons, trying to be insolent."

Norz, who had experience in various battles back in the republic, was well aware of what such tactics will have.

But even then, he realized that the current situation was only worth cursing a few times.

"But, it's not a big problem. We have the resources collected from the previous villages. Have them quickly carry it all here."

Scorched Earth tactics could only show their full effect when the enemy has no way of procuring supplies at site.

At that point, Norz had no reason to worry since they had sufficient supplies gained from previous villages.

“Then, let’s prepare according to that.”

Norz was expecting a few words of sarcasm so he felt uncomfortable from the obedient agreement he got.

“You’re unusually thoughtful today Sister Sylvia.”

“Fighting is your role. If governing a village is not required then my job is only to prepare supplies.”

It was her usual cold attitude but her words did have some modesty.

“Hou, is that so?”

“ee, that is so. I won’t speak unnecessarily so please command freely.”

“I’ll do that.”

Unexpectedly she did know her place.

She had been uselessly speaking all the time, but now that a battle has become inevitable, not a single word of opposition came from her.

After all she must have curried the Cardinal’s favour with her cleverness and womanly weapons, now that an actual battle is at hand, she’s nothing but a girl who can follow orders.

That was how Norz interpreted Sylvia’s attitude change.

Leaving aside whether it was correct or not, the current situation was delightful for Norz. There was no way they’d lose to demons but if his aide had kept on talking uselessly, it would have spoiled the cheers of victory.

“fu, tomorrow I’ll be able to rampage after a long time.”

“Tomorrow?”

“What? Don’t you know that those demons are lying in wait at the Kuar village? There will obviously be a battle tomorrow.”

Don’t you know even something like that? Sighing as if implying that, Norz further spoke.

“Kuar is the only village in this region with walls of stone. If they are going to gain time for the villagers to run away then obviously they’ll chose this village that has the strongest defence.”

“But, according to the reports of the scout troops, there were no signs of enemy in Kuar.”

“.....What?”

He ended up asking her again.

“There’s no one at Kuar.”

He felt embarrassed but soon after his thoughts moved into a different direction.

“Wait, does that mean that the army and the adventurers ran away with the villagers?—fuhaha such cowards!!”

Since they had destroyed Keiva’s squad and scout troops, Norz was thinking that the demons will fight head on.

But after attacking the scout troops, if they ran away then that meant that there was no ambush at Kuar.

“Could it be they thought they could stop us with that simple attack and this half-assed scorched earth tactics, no, maybe they had a falling out among comrades? Well whatever. If the demons have all run away, there is no need to be vigilant. Let’s make the army advance quickly. We can’t let even a single demon run away!!”

Norz had become passionate to start pursuing but Sylvia remained in her usual low tension and continued her report.

“I’m changing the topic but a sealed letter for you has arrived. The sender is Bishop Gregorius.”

“It can’t be an order to return, right?”

Although Kievan’s squad had been annihilated, it was not at a level where they would be ordered to return. In the first place Gregorius himself was in Daedalus, but he had not sent any report.

Norz who had occupied villages one after the other, there was no way he would have any problem or dissatisfaction.

After thinking of various possibilities, Norz removed the seal looked at the contents.

“.....Reinforcements?”

Norz unintentionally muttered.

“Is it a request for reinforcements?”(Sylvia)

“It’s the opposite. He sent reinforcements to us. Here read.”

Sylvia took the letter and spoke after reading it once.

“I saw ominous black shadows towards the place where Norz Priest Head is going, is what is written. Is this some kind of a code?”

“Don’t know, probably he means those words in a literal sense. Bishop Gregorius is a suspicious self proclaimed [Prophet], you didn’t know?”

Norz called his current direct superior ‘suspicious’. Even in this world there is no such thing as an accurate future prediction. Still, calling himself a [prophet] will obviously lead to doubts.

“So is this a [Prediction]?”

“He’s the same as a back-street fortune teller. Anyone can make wild guesses and prove a few true.”

But, since he never clearly gave any prediction randomly, he was able to reach a position as high as a bishop.

“Rather than [prediction] it is more of an [estimation]. Basically, he is a crackpot and calls his estimates as predictions, though I don’t know why.”

“ ‘Ominous Black Shadows’ is what is written here but does that mean that the Bishop has sensed some kind of threat and that is why he sent reinforcements? That’s the only probable explanation.”

“umu, but.....”

Norz thought.

In the letter, neither the details of the reinforcement sent nor their numbers, which squad, nothing has been written.

It should be about 1000 soldiers but what he could not understand was the reason behind this timing to send reinforcements.

If there really is a force that could threaten Norz’s army, then it must be either a large army of undead or a black dragon had appeared.

But this vague [prediction] could not be interpreted. The true identity of the ‘shadow’ could be a sudden accident or a revolt in the squads as well.

After he had thought that far, Norz didn’t feel that this reinforcement was truly meant for helping him.

Worst case, this reinforcement would mix with his squad, and after the western region of Daedalus was captured completely, they would assassinate him and the achievement would be taken by the Bishop.

In that case, the Bishop will definitely say ‘Norz Priest Head fought those despicable demons till the end and lost his noble life’ and cry for him. But the dead cannot be rewarded materially so his superior, that is the Bishop himself, would reap the awards.

“.....At the current stage, reinforcements are not needed. If another squad came, then don’t merge with them and don’t let them move further than Irz.”

“Yes, i understand.”

Yes, Norz could complete the mission to capture western Daedalus without any problems. Even if he was not assassinated, he'll be troubled if the achievements were divided due to stupidly accepting these reinforcements.

Bishop Gregorius was his direct superior in the Crusaders but that didn't mean he could be trusted.

This reinforcement sent due to the cryptic [prediction], Norz interpreted that it was but one of the trickery prevalent inside the Crusaders.

“fun, always making trouble uselessly.”

Norz cursed his superior without hiding it even a bit.

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Cyprus Mercenaries that moved along with Norz's main troops had also stationed in Irz by the 25th.

Ai snuck and looked around the village while avoiding the eyes of the soldiers so that she doesn't get yelled at.

After moving around, she sat down randomly and took out a [portable food] out of her pouch that was made of unknown ingredients and started eating.

“Disgusting, couldn't they have put a little more flavour?”

It looked like a chocolate bar but as Ai said, it had no taste and had texture like hard bread.

It was a thing that made people doubtful to eat even when extremely hungry.

“Tsumiki, wanna eat?”

The black cat sitting around her legs turned and ran away.

“You don’t have to reject me so badly.....”

Ai glared towards the direction the cat ran away.

“yoo, what are you doing in such a place, Ai?”

“uuwa, this shit food just became shittier.”

Ai’s displeasure was clearly seen in her words.

“aa, that’s really shitty, you’re amazing to have actually eaten that.”

“You were the one who distributed it to everyone right?”

“Really? Can’t remember.”

Ai looked away as Cyprus started to guffaw.

Cyprus was accompanied by two women mercs as guards.

In contrast to Cyprus who wore no armour, the women were clad in thick steel armour.

Since those 2 were wearing helms, their expressions could not be seen. Ai ignored them and spoke.

“Don’t give something disgusting like this ever again. If all food became like this, it’ll start a rebellion. Or rather, I’ll be the first to kill you. I gently and slowly stab your heart with a knife and kill you.”

“About that, well, it seems like those clever bastards burned every eatable thing in the village, so it’s difficult to find something good to eat.”

“Eh? No way!”

“Really. You also saw things burnt here and there right?”

No matter how much Cyprus said irresponsible things, Ai wasn’t able to deny his words just this time.

Ai knew how much provision her mercenary group carried, so she also knew that they needed to supply their reserves every now and then.

And if they are unable to procure it locally, they would definitely run out of their current stock within 1 week.

“Then ask the Crusaders to share some with us. They should have some surplus right?”

“Not possible. Bowing to that filthy old man and asking for help is impossible for me. My pride won’t allow me to.”

Ai knew that this man could have his own merc group starve just to maintain his own appearance, that too without any ill intentions. And it was really true as well.

“Deal with it. I still have my share of food, the tasty ones.”

“And for everyone else?”

“Portable food.”

“Die. You should really die.”

Maybe because they reacted towards Ai’s half-serious words, the two guards put their hands on their swords.

Ai, who was sitting, could see their expressionless faces from beneath the helm.

Ai thought that those faint expressions looked more like those of a slave rather than a soldier.

“You’ll be fine with portable food. As long as you have water along with it, you can keep on living. So everyone should get along and eat it. I won’t eat it though.”

Whether he realized the reaction of the 2 or not, Cyprus continued speaking in his usual joking style due to which the women did not draw their swords.

“Rather than that, Ai you could just eat with me. Why don’t you come to my place tonight?”

“haa?”

“I have lots of alcohol and cannabis as well. It’ll be fun!”

Disgusted from Cyprus gaze that was licking all over her, she gave the words of refusal.

“It’s fun only inside your head. If you’re starving for women then go look for someone else.”

“But only Ai’s left among our group and I’m bored of these ones. I can’t lay my hands on Sister and there aren’t any demons here.”

“I don’t care.”

Ai, who was at her limit for talking with him, put the last bit of food inside her mouth and stood up.

“For the time being, as a captain, do something about the food.”

“weeii.” (T/N: half-assed sound for acceptance lol)

With even glancing again towards Cyprus, Ai left the place.

She hadn’t decided whether to return back to the camp or to roam around more, but for the time being, she wanted to get away from this disgusting man.

“aa, Ai-chan really is difficult to tempt.” (Cyprus)

Cyprus spoke looking bored. As he turned around, he raised his fist overhead and struck it directly on the face of the woman standing beside him.

The dull sound of the hard fist striking flesh and bone resounded.

Without raising even a single scream, she fell down as her nose bled. The other who did not get hit didn’t even seem to care about it.

It was normal to hit them. There was no reason behind it. They were not allowed to even ask for a reason.

“aa fuck fuck, why are there no demons here? Don’t run away, it’s troublesome.”

He struck the fallen woman with her boots countless times.

As if crushing an insect, he showed no mercy or restraint.

“Seriously, what should I do? I won’t get either food or women for some time— should I keep on advancing— No, that won’t work, that would be dangerous after all. Shit, no choice but to be patient.”

After grumbling, he finally raised his head.

“Well whatever. I’ll just give some randomly. The food will hold till we catch up to those demons at least.”

CHAPTER 92

ALCHEMIST

26th of the month of Shinyou, Morning.

“.....What the hell?”

Currently, the Alsace village was congested with the people evacuating towards Spada.

In the central plaza, many tents had been set up that made it look like the camp site of the Daedalus army.

“It doesn’t look like the Natsugoshi festival. What the hell happened while I was on a quest?.....”

He was the rank 1 adventurer of Alsace village, Simon. 1 week ago, he had secluded himself at the foot of the Gallahad mountain ranges and finally returned after completing a quest to collect medicinal herbs.

But, when he returned, he found the village filled with anxious people with a negative aura.

There must have been some kind of an unexpected emergency. He thought that but since he had a shy personality, he decided to directly head towards the guild rather than question the people there.

“Eh!? What’s that? That guild has become totally black!?!”

He reached the guild but he was once again received another surprise.

1 week ago, when he was leaving, the guild was definitely painted white but now it was as black as the dark night itself.

“Coating work.....there’s no way.....”

In front of the jet black guild, he became a bit hesitant but if he didn't enter he won't be able to get the reward either, so he had no other choice.

With a doubtful expression, Simon put his hand on the door and opened it slowly.

“uwa.....”

The lobby of the guild was filled with armed adventurers.

Although it was a normal scene inside the guild but what was abnormal was the sheer number of adventurers. There were just too many of them.

It was like a guild of an urban city. Thinking that, Simon moved towards the counter.

But he received a surprise for the third time.

“The counter is closed!?”

The counter won't close until an official emergency quest had been declared.

A question mark appeared over Simon's head as he was unable to make any sense of the situation.

“Why.....rather, what should I do.....”

When he looked around, there were only never before seen adventurers.

No, Simon, who had come here only a few days back as a solo, he never really had anyone he could talk to anyway in Alsace.

“Just what happened to the village and the guild??”

What should he do next, how could he get the reward for his quest, what was happening right now, as he thought all these things, Simon stood stupefied in one corner of the lobby.

“You, over there.”

Simon who was thinking while hanging his head down, heard a voice from above.

“Eh?”

As he raised his eyes, the one who stood there was a man dressed from head to toe in complete black clothes.

He was also a human but was much taller than him. Since he was wearing a robe, he must be a magician but his muscles made him look like a warrior instead.

Although he had a sharp nose and a well maintained body, his expression was extremely sharp, and the man gave an immense amount of intimidation.

(“Uwa, he looks like the type I’m bad against.....”)

He was not prejudiced. Since Simon had a short stature, he had the experience of being scorned by men of the same age for that.

Especially those who were blessed with a better physique used to make fun of him more.

But, suppressing his trauma in his heart, he replied with a monotone cold voice.

“What is it, Onii-san?” (T/N: Onii-san can be used in this sense as well when someone tries to give respect to a person only a few years older. Actual relation isn’t necessary. Tho Kurono is probably the younger one here lol.)

“I haven’t seen you before. Did you return from a quest just now?”

“Yes.....”

He replied coldly to the man.

(“He talked to me at least, so I should ask the current situation from him as well.”)

Simon thought that.

He wanted to ask for an explanation but the man spoke first.

“The thing you’re holding, is that a gun?”

Those words made Simon widen his eyes in surprise.

“.....How do you know that?”

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(POV change to Kurono)

After completing the blackening of guild successfully, everyone, especially Mossan,

“Amazing boss Kurono! I knew you could do it. I believed in you till the end!!”

-Kept on praising me. After that I returned to the lobby.

My body wasn't weak enough to get tired with just one all-nighter but due to continuously using magic, I was still mentally tired.

I was about to return to my room and take a 1 hour break but,

“Th, That's —“

As it suddenly came into my view, shockwaves ran through my brain.

The one I was looking at was a single Elf. I clearly make that out due to the characteristic long pointed ears.

He had grey short hair, emerald big eyes like Lily and had a cute girly face, wait, is it a guy?

He was wearing a dark blue coat and leather boots and trousers. I could make out from his attire that he was probably a guy.

If he was wearing a skirt like the 3 sisters of [Three Hunting Princesses] I would definitely thought that he was a girl.

Anyway, I wasn't shocked because I fell in love with that boy-girl but because of the weapon he(?) was holding.

“——Isn't that a gun!?”

That long iron cylinder was definitely like that of a gun.

When that boy-girl looked the other way, I could also see the grip as well as the trigger. I'm pretty sure now.

It looked like a shotgun, no, it looked more like a Rifle without the stock.

I did see some Crusaders holding bowguns but I never thought I would see guns in this other world.

I became high with tension even after the all-nighter by just seeing that. Of course to avoid suspicion of the other Adventurers, my face was still in a poker face from outside.

“I'm curious now, wait, couldn't that gun become a major power for us?”

In any case, since an emergency quest has been made, he will also become a part of our alliance anyway. I should talk to him now.

I moved towards him(?) who was standing in one corner of the lobby looking somewhat lonely.

Damn, I'm a bit nervous now. Why does it feel like I'm hitting on some girls in a city? Not that I have ever done it actually.

“You, over there.”

Calmly and normally, I called him.

“Eh?”

He raised his head and looked towards me with upturned eyes.

Uoh, now that I look closely, that face is really cute. I am changing it from he(?) to a she(?).

“What is it, Onii-san?”

Were my weird thoughts exposed? She answered with a monotone cold voice while releasing a really rejecting aura.(T/N: yep, kurono uses 'she' here.)

I really am shocked from that clearly super cold reaction. Well, my eyes have always been bad and I am also wearing a full black looking robe as well. Anyone would get a bit vigilant against a suspicious looking person, right?

Let's leave it at that.

"I haven't seen you before. Did you return from a quest just now?"

"Yes....."

So she really was an adventurer.

That means, she doesn't know the current situation. It's natural after all. Some who returned yesterday were also the same as her.

But, she really is giving off a seriously gloomy aura.

I'm being unskilful here. Even though I haven't gotten to the main topic, the next words will definitely end the conversation if it goes on like this.

I need to ask her about the gun quickly.

"The thing you're holding, is that a gun?"

".....How do you know that?"

Was my question such a surprise? Her cute eyes opened wide as she looked at me.

"Do people not know about it normally?"

"Unless it's a real weapon maniac, nobody knows about guns. 'Normally' you said, is your common sense normal?"

In just a few seconds after meeting, my common sense is being doubted already.

Well, since I'm not from this world, it's a fact that I still haven't grasped the common sense of this world as of yet. So it can't be helped.

“It was normal where I lived.”

It sounds like an excuse but it's true.

From the common sense of my world, everyone knows about guns after all. Especially guys like me, though I'm still not at the level of being called a gun otaku.

Leaving that aside, from her words it's certain that it's actually a gun.

But, even though there are guns, I wonder why they have not become popular yet? Is it because magic is more convenient? Or maybe because it's too costly? Well, it might be the start of an era where it starts getting popularized from here onwards.

“Anyway, I'm really interested in your gun. Can you show it to me?”

“My gun is a normal lump of steel and not some magical mechanism rod. It's not what magician Onii-san is expecting.”

I see, there must be rods that look like guns as well.

My [Black Ballista Replica] also shows the same effects like a gun if it was shaped like a gun.

Rather than that,

“If it doesn't use magic, that means it is an actual gun that shoots lead balls with gunpowder, right? I want to see that 'real' gun.”

“Onii-san....why do you know even that?”

Huh? Didn't I hear the same thing just a while ago?

Her surprised expression also came for the second time.

“I created this gun that uses gunpowder instead of magical energy to shoot bullets. I have never told anyone about this structure so why do you know that!”

Wait a second, this girl just said that she created it.

“Wait wait, I want to confirm something but those guns that the weapon maniacs know about are all gun-shaped Rods?”

“.....That’s right.”

“And, you created this gun that fires bullets without magic. Could it be that you compounded the gunpowder by yourself as well?”

“It’s not something as amazing as compounding but, yes. That’s why there’s no way anyone else knows about guns that uses bullets. No wait—could it be, there are already such guns at Onii-san’s homeland....?”

In front of her who had started muttering to herself, I got an even bigger shock that the time I saw the gun.

“A genius.”

The history behind guns wasn’t something shallow. The creation of matchlock, invention of gunpowder was made through various trials and errors.

To create that from nothing, that too alone, was impossible.

No, she must have gotten some kind of a hint.

Even so, in this world where gunpowder doesn’t even exist, to have created a gun alone,

“You’re a genius!”

Yes, there’s no other way to describe this.

“O, Onii-san?”

Right now, I might be looking at a great inventor in front of me.

“Amazing, this is amazing, please show me that gun, I beg of you!!”

“uu.....if you go that far, fine.....”

Maybe she had been pulled by my vigour; she was showing a troubled face but I didn't really care about that right now.

She timidly handed the gun to me.

"Thank you!"

As I took it, I could feel the heaviness of the iron in my hands.

I had held model guns but this the first time I held an actual one. But somehow I know from this weight that it's a real gun.

"Does it have bullets inside right now?"

"No way, I have removed them for now. Nothing will happen even if you pull the trigger. It's just a pipe of iron right now."

Then, there's not a chance for an accidental discharge either so I can observe it with relief.

"It feels like a hunting gun—"

It's appearance is that of a hunting gun without the stock. But after matching it's appearance with the ones in my mind, I found a gun that matched it better.

"A Contender." (T/N: It's the name of a gun. Google it. Kiritsugu uses it in Fate Zero.)

It was a single shot pistol developed by the America's Thompson. It looks really similar to it.

But, since it's meant for her use, the grip is somewhat smaller. It looks more like a compact version of it.

It looks like a hunting gun but its barrel is long. Even longer than the Contender probably. Though I haven't seen an actual one.

"But, its structure is more or less the same."

Since there's neither a bolt nor a magazine, it needs to be loaded after every single shot.

As expected since she created it alone, compared to the current level of guns, it only has the minimum mechanism needed to shoot the bullet.

Except the barrel, the interior doesn't even have the smooth rifling. It must fire round bullets like the matchlock guns. Since there's a red shiny stone on the firing hammer, it must be used as an ignition, basically it's a flint rock type, or something close to that.

That means, gunpowder and the bullet are loaded separately? I'll need to ask the details.

On pulling the bullet, a *gakin* sound could be heard.

I feel moved. That sound is really cool.

"How do you reload? Do you insert the bullet from the barrel?"

"That's how I wanted to do, but right now——"

As I returned the gun, she set it up with familiar hands, and with a *gashan* sound, the barrel snapped open.

"Opening from middle type!?! Damn, so cool!!"

"I know right!? It's really cool!!"

By the way, the contender is also the same type.

Rather than that, I think I just connected with her just now, with this girl whose name I don't even know——oh right,

"I hadn't introduced myself yet."

"Eh, un."

I took out my guild card from my pocket and showed it to her.

"I'm Kurono, nice to meet you."

".....Simon."

We named ourselves, and exchanged our cards.

Name- Simon, Rank 1, Class- Alchemist, is what was written on her card.

“Alchemist?”

I saw this class for the first time.

I could understand if it was a magician of fire or darkness but what kind of a class was an alchemist?

“Onii-san, you don’t know about Alchemists?”

“Those who turn things into gold?”

“Yeah, without magic.”

“.....you can do it?”

“No way. If it was possible, gold won’t be used as money anymore.”

I guess that was obvious. After all the value of gold is absolute no matter which world it is.

You can’t create gold even with magic.

“Alchemists are researchers that work on things other than magic. Not everyone researches a way to create gold.”

“I see, other than magic.....”

That means, it’s the same as my world, something like an ancestor to scientists.

If that’s the case, then I am even more curious.

It could be that Simon might have invented something else that is the same as my world as well.

For someone who has been swung around by magic all the time after being summoned, I want to see something more scientific after a long time.

“Does that mean you have a research laboratory as well?”

“It’s not something that amazing but there is a need to have a place to do experiments so I have borrowed a lodge nearby.”

“If possible, can you show me there?”

“Eeh!? Th, that’s.....”

“Ah sorry. Could it be the lab has lots of secrets? Then there’s no need to—“

No, that’s not it. After all, no one other than me can understand it anyway, but, it’s really cramped so it’s difficult to bring someone else as well.....”

I see, so the reason is a replacement of “ My room is dirty so you’re not allowed to enter it alright!?”

But still, I really don’t have time right now.

I might find something there that might help me against the Crusaders so I need her cooperation no matter what.

Wait, I haven’t really explained the situation to her at all either.

“I’m changing the topic a little but actually an emergency quest has been issued. This village is facing a critical condition.”

“Ah, right, I wanted to know about that as well! What’s happening in the village right now? There are a lot of adventurers and the counter is closed. Also my reward—“

“I get it I get it, I’ll explain everything so let’s talk while we walk towards your lab.”

“Eh, is going to my place already decided?!”

“Sorry but in the end, that’s what we’ll do.”

I just realized it but, this girl is really good at Tsukkomis. I feel like playing around with her a bit more.

Lily is just a child, Fiona is an airhead, I really had no chance to joke around. And now I get these reactions from Simon-chan.

It feels the same as when I was in my literature club and had a conversation with a junior boy from the Illustration club to make some illustrations for my own light novel.

That guy was also child faced and it was difficult to tell whether he was a guy or a girl. It can't be helped that Simon-chan's overlapped with him

Damn, I feel like crying a bit due to happiness and homesickness.

"Why are you being moved to tears Onii-san?"

"No, I just remembered my home for a bit."

"Was there something nostalgic during our conversation?"

That's right, I don't have the time to be swept with nostalgia. If I keep playing the idiot(boke), I'll be able to relieve my stress but the conversation won't move any further.

I need to quickly explain the situation and get her cooperation and also think about how to use guns in actual battle.

"Anyway, I need your strength right now!"

".....Is that a joke?"

"No, I'm really serious this time."

Maybe because I joked around too much, the trust in my words seems to have plummeted.

"My bad. I think you'll get it once I'm done explaining."

"fun, well fine. Then shall we go?"

"Yeah."

Oh, I needed to tell the others that I'm going out for a bit as well.

If the leader disappeared suddenly, they'll think I ran away.

I clapped loudly and called the adventurers.

"Oi, everyone, listen for a second."

The adventurers in the lobby all reacted to my voice instantly and looked here.

"Wait, Onii-san what are you——"

"I'm going out for a bit. I'll be back before noon. After that we'll practice as planned so be ready as required."

""""Roger.""""

After hearing their reply, I and Simon-chan left the guild.

".....Onii-san, just who are you?"

"I showed you the guild card right? Rank 1 adventurer and a black magician."

I'm also the leader of the Adventurer alliance but I'll leave the explanation for later.

CHAPTER 93

ASSAULT! SIMON'S LABORATORY

"I see.....so it had turned into something troublesome."

In my hands, is the bulletin of the emergency quest that I got from Onii-san.

I understood somewhat about the situation because of it.

If I had been secluding myself in mountains for 1 more week, I would've encountered the dreadful army called as Crusader.

"Right now the embankment is under construction for the purpose of being a protective wall."

In front of the area where Onii-san pointed his finger, there were beast men and dwarves erecting fence of woods and wrapping some sort of iron wire around it.

From the looks of it, the villagers are preparing themselves for fighting even while knowing the situation.

"We will stop Crusaders here, at worst they will come here day after tomorrow."

"Then, is it alright to be hanging out with me? You're leader right?"

"And so, I want the guns. They are amazing and powerful weapons, after all."

"It ain't that special. It can be repelled by any monster with somewhat hard scales or skin and it's attack is also lame compared to any lower grade explosion magic. And if one doesn't know how to use it, then the chanting is more fast than reloading. I doubt I will need to say about chantless magic then."

A normal bullet can inflict damage up to monsters of rank 2.

Even inside rank 2 monsters, there are those with strong scales and skin, and there are those with increased defense abilities due to magic.

And not only monsters, An armor enchanted with defense magic can easily repel the bullets. Furthermore, a lower grade defense magic might be able to block 1 shot or 2 shots.

To break those defenses, higher grade magic or martial arts will be needed.

That's why, a person like me with neither martial arts or magic can ever become a rank 2 adventurer.

Though not much time had passed since I registered, but I can only think of me being rank 1 even after 10 years.

"Indeed, it may be disadvantageous against monsters. But gun is more reliable in killing a human being."

Onii-san's eyes became scary when he said that.

He is definitely hating the enemy that will be coming soon. Even I, said to be oblivious of human emotions, can feel it.

"Enemy's attire is chainmail under a thick surcoat. They don't have any armor with defense magic. Therefore, gun is the best choice. Humans are weak than other races. They get hit once and they can't fight, so a gun capable of wounding them is perfect."

I've never shot any human, but have shot some goblins. Just like Onii-san said, a race without that sort of skin or scales will be able to go down in just one shot.

But it can't rapid-fire, and I'm a solo adventurer so I doubt if I will be able to fight against a crowd.

"And this time, we have the vanguards, right?"

Onii-san speaks as if he saw through me.

"I want you shoot down the enemies that will come from the riverside, can you do it?"

"The river is pretty near. So I can shoot them even while being on the other shore."

".....Really?"

Onii-san makes a surprised face, oops, is he thinking that I'm lying.

"If one can't do something like that, then guns aren't suited for them. And bullets are more pricy than arrows, if I keep on missing my targets then I'll go bankrupt."

Arrows are sold in bundles at every village, but bullets need to be order made and so it needs more money.

"Is that so, then can you show me, no, can you even let me shoot?"

Onii-san makes an excited expression. Really, though being a magician he loves guns. He is weird.

"Ah, if you're worrying about money of bullets. I will give you, will this suffice?"

Onii-san throws a single coin. I in a panic catch it so it won't drop.

"1 Gold!? I can't take this much!"

"Just that it, think of it as prior investment."

"What?"

"Don't mind too much about it."

"If you say that much, then it's fine....."

I don't have any reason to refuse, and it won't break from just pulling the trigger. This was made to be unbreakable even if used pretty rashly.

I quickly reload the gun, and hand it over to Onii-san.

"Whoa....."

Onii-san's eyes are sparkling. He really is a child.

"From here, yeah, that tree over there is inside it's attack range."

I point my finger towards a tree standing on the roadside 150 metres forward.

It is big, but it's trunk pretty thick around that of a human skull. It's very good for experimenting.

"great, then here I go—"

The smell of dry gunpowder floats.

The gun definitely did shoot out the loaded bullet, but where did the bullet went is unconfirmed.

"I missed. This is difficult."

"That's how it is if not familiar to it."

"That's right, indeed—"

Onii-san moves his hand not holding the gun forward. Magic starts swirling around his hands and a black bullet materializes.

That bullet was not like the round one I used. It was long and arrow along with a pointed tip and edge.

Huh, maybe a pointed edge and tip will increase the power of a bullet—

While I was thinking that, the black bullet is fired with an explosion sound and in a ultra high speed.

Bakin The sound of the trunk of tree breaking reaches the ears.

"As expected, if not familiar I can't hit it."

"Onii-san, the one right now"

"It's my original magic. I made an offensive magic with the image of a gun."

'It doesn't has barrel neither trigger so it doesn't look very cool' while saying that Onii-san laughed.

Onii-san if you have a magic like that, why would you need gun.

The gun I have made through a lot of troubles, is nothing of a big deal to a magician like Onii-san who can just make it in any quantity.

I really hate magic. From the point of view of a person who can't use it, there's no other thing more sly than this.

"Now, show me how to use it."

"yeah"

Let's stop it, I don't envy the magic. After all now I'm an alchemist who doesn't rely on magic.

I reload the bullet in gun, just by doing this process my concentration rises.

After setting up the gun, there only the enemy in front of it.

A target at this distance is easy. Even if won't hit at pin point, I can still aim at it and shoot it.

Without even letting 1 second pass after setting up the gun. I pull the trigger.

Shoot & Hit. It's only natural to hit after it's fired.

"You're great! It hit on one try!"

"N-Not really, anyone can do this once familiar with this. You're the first one to praise me after shooting with a gun. Normally people shrug their shoulders while saying "Ah, so what?" and like that."

If it's just hitting the target, even Onii-san could do it with magic.

"Hey, will it be able shoot if I throw this in air."

"Eh, What do you mean?"

Before I knew it, in Onii-san's right hands a black round object was made by magic.

It's near 30 centimetres in length. Is he saying of hitting it in the air. It seems interesting.

I reload the bullets and once again set up the gun.

“Throw it.”

“Kay, then here I go.”

Buun While cutting through the air, the black disk flies at the speed of an arrow.

The black disk makes a slight curve due to the wind attacking it and slowly increases its distance.

Hitting a moving target is more difficult than hitting unmoving target. It is still easy to hit because it can't make sudden movement like monsters.

I pull the trigger, sound of fire resounds and the black disk in air smashes into pieces.

“You even excel at clay-pigeon shooting too! You have, without a doubt, the talent for sniping.”

“Ah, th-that.....clay-pigeon shooting is what.....”

“Hahaha, don't be shy.”

While laughing in good mood, Onii-san violently strikes my shoulders.

I-It kinda hurts, you know. And suddenly Onii-san starts patting my head.

“Please s-stop it!!”

I realise my always stiff facial expression is loosened and I'm also laughing.

Thats right, this is first time someone has praised me so straightforwardly and has accepted me.

CHAPTER 94

ASSAULT! SIMON'S LABORATORY

Standing there was not a cabin or shed but more like a storeroom. [ET: Remember he wanted to go to her laboratory.]

"C-come in....."

Simon opened the door with an embarrassed expression and invited me in.

"So this is the laboratory, huh"

"That's right! Something like this is my laboratory you got a problem!? It can't be helped at all! A rank 1 adventurer ain't got money to buy a spacious room!"

"No, I know about that so calm down."

I now understand why we crossed the garden instead of entering through the front door of this lodging and come to this place. So this is Simon's lodging room cum laboratory.

Well it would be bad if one were to use the guest room of lodging for something other than sleeping or resting. And with the income of a rank 1 adventurer acquiring a spacious room for sleeping and work is impossible.

I understand that Simon sleeps here and does research. I also agree on it but still,

"Pitiful....."

I spoke my feelings in a low voice so as she can't hear. [ET: Till the time it ain't proved Simon is a boy I won't change she/her/herself to get that.]

"Sit down" (Simon)

She pulls a chair of woods from under the desk she might be using a lot and offers it me.

There is no other chair and so Simon sat on the bed.

Hey! Now that I look at it, that is just some wooden boxes lined up and a sheet is spread on them. Where the hell is bed then!

It's really bad, Shimon-**chan** looks like the protagonist from Unlucky Human that premieres on World's Masterpieces Show. Really pitiful.

"Onii-san, you just thought of something rude just now, right?"

"No, I never did! Still, this place does has the feeling of an laboratory—"

After inspecting the room, the first impression that comes is "Damn full of things."

On the desk there are many thick books which look like old-fashioned dictionary lined one upon another. Various tools are scattered too.

There are also mechanism for making tools, a suspicious brights coloured liquid, raw materials like fangs and scales of monsters. These all were spread on the desk, table, shelves, floor, everywhere.

Yep, it does has the feel of laboratory. Almost to the extent that it coincides with my fantasy images.

This really is the laboratory of an alchemist! I can say that without a doubt, well I don't know how other alchemists are though.

"—I don't have much time, so let's get right to the main point."

"Eh, Yeah"

Maybe I released a somewhat serious atmosphere, Simon showed an expression of nervousness.

Indeed, the talk from here on is me speaking as the leader of adventurer alliance.

"First of all I need to confirm one thing. Will you accept the emergency quest?"

"Of course, I'm also an adventurer, and I have no objection in accepting the request."

Simon replies immediately without any hesitation.

“This time is pretty dangerous, you know, no one can guarantee your safety.”

“That isn’t something you say to an adventurer. If it was someone else, that person would definitely snap. But still, I will take that as a warning.”

“Sorry, i just wanted to confirm.”

Most adventurers follow after strong people, but Simon didn’t feel like that to me. And she also seems like someone who never fought at front lines, So I wanted to confirm her determination.

“And so, I want Simon to help me with something, unfortunately we don’t have much time so I don’t know whether it will be done or not—”

“What is it?”

“I want you to make a machine gun” [ET: Yaay now we are talking.]

.

.

.

Lily and Fiona came down to the first floor lobby through stairs as if they are really good sisters.

“Creating Potions tires the eyes.” (Fiona)

“Yep, and that so repeatedly~”

After completing the compounding which included staring game and weighing to split the potions in accurate quantity, both came down for resting and eating food.

By the way, the way Lily compounds is through measuring by the eye. She somehow compounds the raw material while playing a staring game with them.

“Thank you for your hard work, will you take a breather from now?”

The one who calls out to them is the dark magician skeleton, Mozrun.

For the republic it may be someone who might become a subjugation target as soon as he is spotted, but Fiona is already familiar with his appearance resembling that of grim reaper.

“Yes, we got hungry”

“Ahahaha, it’s always that, don’t finish up our all provisions before the fight.”

“I’ll try to.”

“Hey Where is kurono?”

Lily restlessly surveys the lobby, but she couldn’t find the black tall figure.

The leader Kurono is a lot busy.

If it was someone like Vulcan, he would’ve silently waited for the enemy to come, but Kurono who is giving his all in preparations and is the busiest person here.

Stationing of adventurers, coordination between parties, construction progress, securing the goods and more is all the work Kurono needs to complete.

Due to that Kurono is not waiting in the guild but is moving around the whole village.

“Maybe he is in Conference Room”

“Ah, wrong. Boss went out some while ago.”

Mozurun overturns Fiona’s prediction.

“So that’s how it is”

“Eeh, where did he go?”

Mozurun kindly and thoroughly answers to Lily asking a question in a childish manner.

“He went out with a really beautiful elf girl. Right now he might be having some pleasure time. Well he had been working a lot, this much of breather is allow—”

“Not allowed”

““!?””

Just as Fiona and Mozrun sensed a vast amount magic swirling,

“I won’t allow any of that.”

In front of their eyes, was Lily who returned to her original form.

The cute loveable face of the child is no more alive, the only things that remains is a young girl with a beautiful face seeming like a Noh Mask.

“.....Lily-san?”

On Lily’s sudden change, Fiona breaks out in cold sweat.

She senses the white light magic which will result in big explosion if touched.

Thanks to that, Mozurun is now trembling with fear of getting purified by her light.

“I will bring Kurono back”

“E—” (Fiona)

Their eyes meet, but in her eye Fiona is not all reflected. No doubt she is seeing ‘something’ in far distance.

Before Fiona could answer, Lily was no more in her line of sight.

“.....It would be good if it doesn’t turn into something troublesome.”

“Boss, please, please come back in once piece.....”

Fiona and Mozrun saw Lily off who went out in super high speed, or rather, they couldn’t even see her off.

CHAPTER 95

FIRST TIME JEALOUSY

Affair. If someone were to ask if this word would apply to Kurono's behaviour, the answer would be NO.

Kurono treats Lily as his partner and puts a tremendous trust in her, and treats her more importantly than anything else in this different world, but there is no advancement in terms of romance.

If you were to look from the start, he would hug her, pat her head gently, and has even more skinship than a normal couple, but they were not lovers.

That's because Lily had never revealed the passionate feelings in her heart, that is, she had never confessed to Kurono. And neither did Kurono do so nor did he have intention to do something like that.

But this point of view was worthless theory in Lily's eyes.

("Who is it!? The woman, the bitch, the beast that tried to seduce my, MY Kurono!! Try laying even a single finger on him, I'll kill you so badly that not even small bits would remain!!!")

Mozrun who basically said that Kurono had gone to sleep with a woman, was taken extremely seriously by Lily.

("I won't forgive her! I will never forgive something as envious as that!! I haven't even ki, ki, kissed with him yet!!!")

Her emotions were exploding out as if her own restraints had been blown away to the moon.

("Where? Where did Kurono go? Where is he.....")

But, still to locate Kurono calmly even then was what made her cunning.

("If she is still in the village, then it must be an adventurer. Also, Mozrun said it was a 'cute elf girl' as well, so it's not a member of [Three hunting princesses] but someone that came today. That means, she must have returned after completing some quest without knowing the current situation. Then they must be in a place where she could be alone with a man—-an inn of an adventurer, is it?")

There are two facilities where adventurers can stay in Alsace. One is the Guild, and the other is the common inn. Considering the scale of Alsace village, having another inn except the guild could be said to be a well equipped village.

And Lily has completely mapped this small village in her brain. Without even a single hesitation, she flew towards the only inn in the village.

.
. .

Found it.

Behind the inn, there is a dirty storage shed. Kurono and that thieving cat are here.

"Kurono.....I'll save you right now."

Thinking that my Kurono could be dirtied right now, I felt every second was precious.

Thinking about it from outside was nothing but a waste of time.

So I'll break in from the front and take the shortest distance towards Kurono.

But I'll still take care. After all she is someone who was able to capture Kurono, who is the greatest man in this world, even if it was for only a short time. As long as she is an adventurer, she should be able to use force to remove obstacles as well.

Although, no adventurer can stand against the serious me, no, even if it was a rank 5 adventurer stronger than me or a dragon, I will still not hesitate to go help Kurono. I must not hesitate.

And, at this moment, I'll prove it.

In front of the weak wooden door,

“Fairy barrier – Oracle Field, full power!”

Light type defensive magic destroyed not just the door but even the wall that it touched as well, and made a path for me.

Beams, Light balls, and even [Meteor Strike]’s chant has been completed as I enter. If I face resistance, I’ll erase without leaving any trace!

“Kurono!!”

As I broke inside the room, I found his beloved figure inside this room scattered with various items.

“Lily!?”

“Eh, What!? What’s going on!? Why has the door been destroyed!?!”

Kurono who widened his eyes in shock and another person was there. I see, so this is the thieving cat that tried to steal my Kurono?

Petite and slender body, along with gray hair and pointy ears, that were the characteristic feature of elves.

Her face was as Mozrun had said, cute, and her eyes were green like a cat’s.

But, from my point of view, it’s only average. Her beauty was not on a level that Charm would exist. She didn’t even have an adult body with a good figure. She’s just a brat.

If he wanted to lay his hands on such, such a low level woman, why did he not come to me—No, I should stop. First I need to eliminate her.

“It’ll be fine Kurono, I’ll save you right now.”

Their clothes are still on. Looks like I avoided the worst scenario. That’s a relief. But I can’t be negligent until I remove her from in front of Kurono.

I smiled towards Kurono to make him feel relieved and then glared at the elf brat with intent to kill.

“hi, Hiii!?!”

Fuun, weak scum, afraid from just my killing intent.

If she wants to lay hands on Kurono, she should first refine her pathetic skills at least, this third rate stupid woman——no, wait, wait a second.

“.....”

Is it actually a guy?

I just had an intuition but to check that I’ll try to use telepathy deep inside his mind.

I soon got my answer.

(“Why——Why? Even though I’m a man——weak, pathetic——”)

He’s a genuine man.

He looked cute as tears appeared in his big round eyes, but this elf is definitely a man.

But, I still can’t be negligent.

No, if Kurono actually liked ‘this type’ then I can understand why he didn’t lay his hands on me.

Especially strong men like not just girls but even boys, something like that was written in one of the books left by the magician in the hut in the forest.

Then, did Kurono have an urge to have this boy——

“Wait a second Lily!! You are definitely misunderstanding something!!!”

Suddenly Kurono had come in front of me. What, are you going to cover this brat who is not even a girl?

“This person is not an enemy! Just an adventurer, I came to talk to get help from this person!”(T/N: I am using ‘this person’ intentionally because Jap doesn’t specify gender many times, like in this case.)

“I don’t believe it.”

“This person came back from a quest just now, so I understand that you haven’t seen this person before but it’s not a spy or something from the Crusaders!”

I think there is some kind of a very big difference in what we are talking about.

No, it’s definitely different, and the problem would be on my side, I think.

Eh, what? Did I jump to an early conclusion?

“Ok? So calm down and listen—-“

“Oh, I see.....”

That’s fine.

At least, I don’t sense any sexual urges from Kurono’s outer layer of thoughts at least.

There’s no feeling of trying to hide a secret. He’s only trying to somehow stop me from acting while misunderstanding things.

I see. He was just a co-operator.....then, that means I was having an embarrassing misunderstanding only. So everything will settle peacefully here.

“.....then, let me hear the details as well.”(lily)

I decided to obediently back down.

If Kurono does not have any feelings for this boy then I have no problems.

What’s more problematic is what that skeleton bastard irresponsibly said. What, what did he mean by ‘He must enjoying himself right now!’, damn him this isn’t a joke. Due to that I ended up showing Kurono such an unsightly part of me.

I’m not gonna calm down until I at least hit him with one of my light beams.

“aa, um, this is Simon, a rank 1 adventurer.”

And after introducing myself to this guy called Simon, I listened to the situation from Kurono.

Though, now that I know that she's not an 'enemy' woman, my interest in him has almost disappeared.

“—and so, I asked Simon to cooperate with me.”

For the rest I'll just vaguely listen and act as I am convinced and this mess will be settled.

Or so it was supposed to be.....

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“Why are you making such a scary face Lily-san? Could it be that Kurono-san really was—”(Fiona)

“No, it was nothing. It was just a misunderstanding of that vulgar skeleton.”

On Fiona's question, Lily made an effort to answer as calmly as possible.

But, Lily didn't realize that Fiona still said that she had a 'scary face' even though Lily had returned to her child form.

“I see. Then that's fine. It's not rare to see a party disbanding due to a love affair after all.”

“How rare of Fiona to say something decent. Have you experienced it?”

“No, I only saw something like that happen, so you can say I was an observer.”

“I see. Well, be relieved. Kurono isn't a weak man who can't control his sexual desires.”

And Lily left after saying that she needed rest.

She was heading towards the room used by Kurono.

The person himself (kurono) was still talking with Simon in that lab cum storage room that suddenly had better ventilation due to the door disappearing.

Lily entered the empty room and jumped on the bed and stretched her limbs.

“.....It’s irritating.”

Lily pulled the blanket and buried her face in the pillow and breathed the scent left by Kurono.

Normally, there was nothing more relaxing than this aroma but right now, it only created waves in her heart.

“Why did Kurono.....such.....”

Just what was it? She didn’t know why she was so disturbed.

But she knew the source of that feeling.

“He looked so haapy.....”

That was how Kurono was with Simon.

The existence of guns. Alchemy that didn’t use magic. As she was listening to him, she realized that Kurono was extremely attracted towards the ability possessed by Simon.

That was so clear that she didn’t even need telepathy to know that.

Delight, curiosity, expectations, and other such strong feelings mixed together were clearly delivered to Simon as a straight compliment.

“I don’t know that. I never got such feelings, I never received them.”

Lily had certainly created an emotional bond with Kurono, and also built up an unbelievable amount of trust in each other as well, that was no doubt about it. They clearly had a strong bond with each other.

For Kurono, in this different world, no, in his whole life, except for his family, there was no one more important than Lily.

Kurono's trust and deep affection were both, without a doubt, real. And Lily also understood that.

But affection and interest were 2 different emotions.

Lily certainly possessed Kurono's 'feelings/emotions' but she never made him interested in her.

Simon's existence had pulled Kurono's interest, which Lily had been unable to, completely through Alchemy.

As to why Kurono was so interested in Alchemy, Lily didn't look into his inner thoughts. No, she was unable to 'look over the construction'.

But rather than the reason, the fact that Simon had pulled Kurono's interest in him was,

"I don't like this, Why, Why someone like him....."

Above all, she couldn't simply accept it.

Lily, until now, was never dissatisfied with her current relation with Kurono.

No just due to Kurono's behaviour, but Lily herself was satisfied as well.

For example, appearance.

There are many beautiful women like Fiona and Irina that appeared in front of Kurono.

But, she didn't think that she was inferior to them in looks, thus she never became jealous of their beauty.

Kurono, who fought with his life on the line as an adventurer; she even had the strength to fight beside him so she never felt tormented by powerlessness either.

Yes, I am the perfect partner for Kurono, I don't lack anything. That was what Lily thought.

But, today, with the appearance of the man called Simon, the fact that she could fulfil his heart was overturned.

“Why, Why is this so frustrating——”

And so Lily became aware of the emotion that was rampaging within her.

That was, for Lily who possessed absolute beauty and strength, an emotion she had never experienced.

A primitive emotion that comes to humans instinctively, that has been labelled as one of the major sins, a negative emotion.

“——I see, I am feeling jealous.”

Lily, for the first time after being born, experienced jealousy.

CHAPTER 96

MPK TACTICS

On the 26th of Shinyou, The Crusader troops led by Norz finally occupied Kuar that was also empty like Irz.

It should be obvious but due to Kurono's scorched earth tactics, they were unable to procure provision from here as well.

As long as there was no one in Kuar, Norz knew that this would be the case and was thus patiently waiting for the supply of provisions.

Norz expected this to continue till they reach the western most village of Alsace as well.

Since not a single demon could be found in the area, he expected to catch up with them by the Gallahad mountains near the border of Spada, beyond the village of Alsace and territory of Daedalus.

Between Alsace and Spada were mountains and the distance was also big. They might have quickly evacuated till Alsace but from here onwards even those demons would have difficulty in travelling and thus their speed will drop greatly as well.

Even if they had departed 1 week earlier, he could easily have the cavalry overtake them. So without any worries or impatience, Norz was moving the troops normally.

ButBut on the 27th of Shinyou, when they reached the village of Hejito, in front of the village that should be empty, Norz felt some unrest, no, it was more of a bad premonition.

And, that soon came true.

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“oo, this storehouse is still alright!”

The soldiers exploring the Hejito village raised their voices in joy on finding a storehouse that wasn't burned at all.

“It'd be nice if it's a food storehouse.”

“No way, it should have valuables instead.”

“Stupid, there's no way there would be a valuable storehouse in this countryside village.”

“Oi, stop with your stupid talks and let's examine it already.”

“”Roger””

Under the command of their squad commander, the soldiers reached towards the door of the storehouse.

There was no lock so it was easily opened without any resistance and they entered the dim storehouse.

“n, doesn't something smell —-“

The soldier that led the way; as soon as he realized that smell of a beast, his words were interrupted.

“—-a?”

When he realized that his stomach had been impaled by a spear, he screamed with fright and pain.

As he fell down as he kept on screaming, numerous blades rushed on to him and his death cries were soon drowned out.

“Oi! There's something in there!!?!”

“What?! What is it!?!”

“Be careful, there are——“

They were unable to make out the identity of the things that killed the soldier inside that dim room.

“Move outside!!”

While swinging his sword towards the invisible enemy, the soldiers ran outside.

“ugaaah!! It hurts!!!”

“Wait! My leg—-“

Two soldiers fell down as their legs were cut. One of them was carried away by another soldier but the other couldn't make it and was dragged away inside the dark storehouse.

While trying to ignore the screams of their comrades, they finally came out after 2 soldiers becoming victims inside.

“Shit! What the hell is this!!”

Outside, the soldiers aimed their arrows towards the door and lied in wait.

Soldiers who had sensed something wrong had also started gathering here.

The soldiers took their stances and prepared their weapons to fight against the invisible enemy that dwelled inside that storehouse.

“It's coming out!”

While raising an unpleasant voice, some beast like, monkey-like, creatures jumped out.

“Fire!!”

The moment they realized that, they fired the bows towards the door.

“It's Goblins!!”

Someone shouted out the identity of the figures jumping out and getting hit by arrows.

“Shit! An ambush by the demons!?”

“They were hiding in there!”

Goblins that wore ragged clothes and were wielding chipped spears, rusted swords, and maces made out of bones appeared.

They were clearly not the type of demons that lived in villages. They were stray goblins that lived in hills, aka monsters.

Why were they here? There were many soldiers who doubted that but right now they didn't have the time to sit and think about it.

“We'll clean up those Goblins. After me!!”

The squad commander swung his long spear and attacked the swarm of goblins. The soldiers raised a war cry and also charged behind him.

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In various parts of the Hejito village, battles with monsters were popping up.

The main street where the commander Norz was was not an exception either.

After hearing the cries of monsters and the warcry of the soldiers, he had pretty much understood the situation even before the messenger came to give the report.

“A demon ambush, is it?”

“They seem to be only wild monsters. There's no sign of any villagers.”

They didn't know the reason behind why the monsters had appeared inside the village but Norz knew what he was supposed to do right now.

“Send some soldiers to every platoon from here. Also I leave the retrieval and treatment of the injured to you Sister Sylvia.”

“Roger that. And, what are you going to do?”

“hahaha, isn’t it obvious.”

Norz got down from his horse, drew the giant mace hanging on his waist and lightly lifted it and put it on his shoulder.

“The God’s enemies are in front of me, it’s the duty of us Priests to kill them!”

The line of spearmen was currently facing against a swarm of goblins whose eyes were glaring at them.

“I see. May the fortunes of war be with you, Norz Priest Head.”

As Sylvia retreated towards the rear, Norz lifted his mace that was bigger than usual ones, with one hand and jumped in front of the line of soldiers.

“Ooh, Priest-sama!”

As the commander himself came to the front lines, the soldiers raised cheers of joy.

This was the first time he was going to display his strength on the Pandora continent now that the enemy had come directly in front of him.

“Come at me damned monsters! Let me pass divine punishment on you in place of God!”

It was unknown whether they understood the meaning of his words or not but all the Goblins instantly pointed their killing intent towards the giant Norz that was standing in front of them.

While swinging their chipped and rusted weapons, the goblins rushed towards Norz.

“Terra Over Blast!! – بـ يرس كـ بـيرة صخرة الـ صخور سحق سحق”

The moment he smashed the mace on the ground, the earth and soil blew up.

As conical stone pillars rose towards the heavens, the army saw the earth itself rising upwards.

As the curtain of earth and sand disappeared, all that was left was numerous corpses of the goblins that had been skewered by the pillars or had their limbs blown away by the attack.

The lucky goblins that were outside the effective range of the magic were still alive but they had already stopped charging towards him like before.

Norz thought that the goblins would be annihilated if he ordered an assault now but, “mu, looks like they have a boss as well.”

Beyond the stabbing pillars, he saw a goblin that wore a better fur pelt as a robe and also had a bone wand in its hands. Seeing that, Norz didn't give the order to attack.

(“Is it a magician type? I need to bring it down first otherwise there would be useless injuries in the army.”)

And the Boss was also accompanied by numerous subordinates and half of them were equipped with bows. And they were also already aiming the bows this way.

“ ! ﺗﺸﻌﻠﻪ ﻋﺴﺎﻡ ﺗﻘﺪﻩ ﺋﺎﺭﺗﺰ ﺋﻼﺋﻤﺎ ”

The Goblin boss' voice was thick but it was clearly a magician's chant and quickly a fireball appeared on the tip of its wand.

“ ! ! ﺗﺒﻴﺮﺱ ﺳﺪﺑﻴﺮﺯ ”

As the chant completed, a red hot explosive fireball with diameter 30cm was fired by the goblin.

As if matching with the boss, the archers also released their arrows.

“ Terra Armour Shield!! — ﺋﻪﻣﺎﻳﻪ ﺟﺪﺍﺭﻙ ﺑﻴﺮﺟﺮ ﺻﺨﺮﻩ ﻣﻨﻌﻲ ”

The Goblins attack approached but it was stopped by the defensive magic used by Norz.

The thick hard rock wall projected from the ground and covered everything from one end to another and stood in the way of the fireball and the arrows.

DODODODO!!!

The sound of explosion resounded and the rock wall vibrated but it easily stopped the attack without receiving even a single crack.

“haaaaaaaa!! Terra Blaaasstttt!!!!”

With a roar, he launched a no chant wide range attack magic.

Norz’s mace struck the wall of rock and the wall broke, no, it broke into numerous pieces of rock that were the size of a head and rushed towards the goblins like cannonballs.

Using the wall as a shield then turning it into an attack was one of Norz’s signature moves.

The rock cannonballs approached at high speed.

With a *gushari* sound, the small bodies of the Goblins were squashed by the tremendous force and death cries resounded, then,

“Now’s the chance! Attack!!!”

Norz gave the order to attack.

And thus the swarm of goblins that met with Norz’s main troops were annihilated in a matter of ten minutes.

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Before the night came, the monsters inside Hejito village were annihilated and they finally completely occupied the village.

Norz took his troops towards one of the storehouses. Inside that, the ‘reason’ behind the monsters appearing in the village was present.

“mu, this is.....”

Inside the dim storehouse, a sturdy steel cage was there.

Inside it, 4 corpses of goblin children were kept.

They must have been killed by the troops that found this place as many arrows used by the crusaders were stuck on them.

Norz narrowed his eyes due to seeing something so filthy and one of the soldiers gave an explanation.

“We have found these things all over the village. Probably, they probably stole eggs or children of the wild monsters and locked them up in these cages.”

Looking closely, there were many scratches on the cage grids.

Monsters who didn't have the skill to break open lock like a Thief must have tried to break open the cages to save their children.

But a rank 1 monster could not display enough strength to break open the cage.

“Then, the demons used these monster children as bait and lured the monsters inside the village to ambush us?”

“Yes, this can't be a simple coincidence after all.”

“Although they are mere monsters, to have used the feelings of parents and children like this.....those demons really used a vile plan!”

Norz or the Crusaders felt no guilt on the deaths of the monsters.

But to have used children to pull uninvolved creatures to battle, Norz, who held the sense of justice of the Cross, could only feel that the plan was evil.

“I thought they were just running away, but it seems they really mean to oppose us.”

He had no basis. It could only be another plan to just gain time.

But Norz's instincts were telling him that the enemy was definitely use 'any means possible' to go against them.

"Those demons really are evil. We must annihilate them as soon as possible."

CHAPTER 97

THE MAXIMUM FIREPOWER OF [ELEMENT MASTER] (1)

30th of Shinyou. Since the Crusaders did not arrive in the shortest expected time, i.e. 3 days, construction work was still continuing to create an even stronger and sturdier line of defence.

And since most of the construction had been done and the adventurers that left for MPK tactic also returned successfully, we decided to postpone everything else for today.

“Today, we’ll perform an experiment to confirm our maximum firepower!”

And so, we came to this vast plain about 1km west of Alsace.

By the way, the members are me, Lily and Fiona only.

Today’s experiment was a simple one to simply fire our strongest attacks and measure its destructive ability.

Normally there seems to be a magic item that is meant to measure this, but right now we don’t have the time to accurately measure it numbers. In the first place, we won’t find such a high tech magic item in this rural area.

For the time being, I’ll at least get an idea about the level after seeing it once.

“Don’t you think it’s a bit too late for this?”

“Don’t say that Fiona. You know everyone was busy till now.”

Well, that’s true.

“I don’t know what level of magic can the adult Lily and Fiona use. But I’m sure its pretty high level so you guys will definitely be the key in the upcoming battle, so I’m counting on you guys!”(kurono)

“Being told this directly is a bit embarrassing.”(Fiona)

“Right?!”(lily)

Fiona who really didn't look actually embarrassed and Lily who was giving a wide smile; these two together really make for a great pic.

But unfortunately, we didn't come here for hiking or picnic. Though that would have been fun, I can't really complain now.

“Then first is—“

“Let's start with Kurono-san.”

“eh? Me?”

“Yes. You're the leader after all.”

“Kurono, good luck!”

I see. I need to do this as well. Lily aside, Fiona had never seen me fight after all.

“Alright. Then I'll show you my best one!”

“waa”

“Waa!”

Fiona clapped unimpressed and Lily innocently clapped loudly. It feels nice.

I was going to start, but wait a second.

If we're talking about my strongest magic, then its [Magic Bullet – Bullet Arts Full Burst].

In terms of piercing ability, Sword Arts might be stronger than a single bullet but that depends more on the ability of the weapon itself. It's base strength is very average.

Also since martial arts are treated differently than magic, the grudge hatchet's [Kuronagi] is also a no go here.

And my [Bullet Arts Full Burst]'s effect is to fire an enormous number of black magical energy bullets rapidly.

If I use this in an empty plain like this one, the bullets will only fly far-faraway and will not cause any kind of explosion either. There'll be no change in the scenery at all.

This won't do. Don't I have something that can just simply cause a lot of destruction? Firing guns requires an aim after all!

"You're making a troubled face Kurono-san. What happened?"

"Does your stomach hurt?" (lily)

While making a calm face, I ran forwards in a straight line.

"Ah."

I heard the voices of the two I left behind but I dashed without paying attention.

After running for about a 100m, yeah, it should be fine here.

"[Shadow Gate]"

[Shadow Gate] is the same as [Shadow Space] that I had been using till now but after taking lessons in techniques from the dark magician Mossan, [Shadow Gate] is the levelled up version with more capacity and faster deployment speed.

By manipulating the shadow, I created a circle-shaped shadow of diameter 1m on the ground.

Controlling the shadow basically shapes my own shadow into different things, so enlarging it and reducing it also possible.

But it can't separate from the caster himself so even this big circle is connected with me with a small shadow.

"Um, Crusaders' armaments were around 1 set right?—"

4th dimensional pocket really makes me feel like that robot cat. Especially now that the goods inside have increased.

From inside the shadow, I brought out the basic equipment of crusaders that was a surcoat and chainmail.

All that's left is to randomly create a humanoid shape and make it wear this.

Materializing magical energy is the speciality of my black magic. I can create a body as long as I don't focus on sturdiness, durability etc.

A randomly created weak thing won't be of any help in a battle but it can at least become a target aim for me.

I created a body of around my height, though it was shaped like a sheet/plank.

I made it wear the chainmail and surcoat and it was complete!

"Well, this much is fine."

And I once again dashed back to where Fiona and Lily were.

"Alright. Then I'll show you my best one!"

"oh so you're going to start again from there." (Fiona)

Fiona's cold words stabbed me but I'll pretend to not mind it.

"I think you would have already understood but I'll fire my magic towards that."

I took one step in front of them and took out my [Black Ballista Replica].

Bullets had already been [loaded] and the bullets now floated around me in a circle.

"[Bullet Arts Full Burst]"

Over a thousand bullets rushed towards the target together.

As if firing against a real soldier, I didn't hold anything back.

The bullets covered the 100m distance in an instant and reached the target.

The human shape became destroyed as if someone put it inside a mixer.

It was as if nothing even existed there in the first place.

“How was it?”(kuro no)

“Um, that’s it?”(Fiona)

“Eh? Yeah I’m done...”

I knew that it wasn’t something really surprising but to think that she would be this disappointed.....

“It won’t explode?”

“There’s no explosion. I only hardened the magical energy after all.”

“a, does it have tracking ability?”

“.....It only flies straight.”

“Was it a Single Action?”

“Yeah I just used single action in a large number.”

“I see——“

I realized even before Fiona said it. My black magic was really,

“——It’s simpler than I thought.”(Fiona)

Fiona who gave a unrestrained opinion made me cry a bit.

CHAPTER 98

THE MAXIMUM FIREPOWER OF [ELEMENT MASTER] (2)

“Kurono, Kurono, cheer up ~”

“Sorry Kurono-san, I’m the type who ends up saying whatever comes to my mind.”

“No.....it’s fine, it’s true that my magic is too simple.....”

“Yes, I couldn’t even lie that it was amazing.”

After hearing Fiona’s words that didn’t give a good follow up at all, I somehow changed my thoughts and cheered myself up from being too negative.

Lily who was still loveably cheering me up was my only emotional support.

“Alright, then next up is Lily?”(kurono)

“Un!”

As she cheerfully replied, she took out a red gem the size of a tennis ball.

This magic Artifact known as [Queen Beryl] possessed an enormous amount of magical energy that allowed Lily to return to her normal form even without the Fairy Queen’s Divine Protection.

I can actually feel it from the shine and magical energy radiating from it.

“eei!!”

With a cute shout, Lily was enveloped in dazzling light and I ended up turning my eyes away due to the light.

“—fuu, now then, I should also do my best, I guess.”(lily)

The next moment, the beautiful young girl version of Lily stood there.

The one piece dress worn by Lily, Ancient velvet was the same as my [Baphomet's Embrace], and changes its size according to the one wearing it.

Thus even after the change in the size of her body, it remained a perfect fit to her body.

“a, no need to create a target for me alright. My magic isn't plain like yours.”(lily)

“guhaa!!”

Even my one and only ally also said such things!?

“nfufu, sorry sorry, I know how amazing Kurono's magic actually is, okay?”(lily)

As an evil playful smile floated on her face, she patted my head while tiptoeing.

What's with this carrot and stick tactics? Is Lily a bad girl who leads men by their noses?

“I'm fine so just show it already.”(kurono)

“Ye~s.”

Giving me a smooth wink, she turned her back towards me and began to chant.

“يَهْ لَكَ تَحْطُمُ نَجُومُ لِقَاتُ”

As expected, I still can't make any sense of it, but I think it was much smaller than the ones I have heard till now.

Only lower level primary Model magic have chants so small, but there's no way Lily's magic would be a low level one.

With just that small chant, above the area where I had set the target, a giant magic circle made of white light appeared.

“Amazing.”(Fiona)

“Yeah, Lily really is amazing.”

The strongest magic of Lily I have ever seen is the pillar of light that is fired from that magic circle in the sky.

Even in her child form, it was strong enough to make the goblin cave collapse. How much stronger will it be now?

The current magic circle was many times bigger than the one I knew.

“—Meteor Strike.”

What was launched from the magic circle wasn't a pillar but a giant mass.

Yes, it was exactly as its name, a meteorite flashing in 7 colours.

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“That was an amazing magic. To be able to control so much magical energy so well, I'm envious Lily-san.”

Fiona complimented Lily in front of the crater of 50m diameter created by Lily.

In front of the power that surpassed our expectations, both me and Fiona had the same mental state.

So magic can actually be this powerful. In front of this, my bullet arts isn't plain, it's nonexistent!

“fuf, thank you. But although it is strong, it is slow in speed so an opponent who is fast can evade it. Kurono's magic bullets are more convenient against human opponents as there is no wastage and it is very efficient in killing as well.”

“That's true. Against the same number of opponents, Kurono-san's magic can finish the job while consuming much less magical energy. Lily-san's magic must use a lot of energy, right?”

“I can’t even use it consecutively infact. I must make sure to use it only when I’m sure of hitting the enemy.”

You two, thanks for covering for me.

“But, a normal magician can’t even produce this much power, right?”(kuroono)

“Well yeah. In my current state, I’m equal to a rank 5.”

“Even in the crusaders, there must be very few who can display this level of power I think.”

“As expected, Lily really is amazingly skilled. Even though its only for 30 mins, you still will be our pillar of protection.”

“ufufufu, that’s right, so compliment me more and more!”

She leaned in close to me just like when she is a child. It’s really embarrassing when she does that in her girl form. But damn she’s too cute!

“Then, lastly it’s my turn.”(Fiona)

“a, aa, give it your all.”

My expression that had relaxed while I fawned over lily became stiff and strict again. Though, my hand was still patting and caressing Lily’s head.

“Yes, as per your demand, or rather, I want you two to see my full strength right now when we have the chance.”

Fiona can’t control her magic properly so she would often attack in an excessively wide range. Basically, there was a risk of friendly fire so she was not taken in by any parties apparently.

Let’s just say that only after seeing her most dangerous one and accepting it will she become our true party member.

That’s why I wanted to see her full strength.

“aa, use the strongest one you can.”(kuroono)

“ok, then——”

And then, she raised her staff [Ainz Broom] overhead and began her chant.

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At the same time, at Alsace village, all the adventurers that were preparing and working stopped moving.

A loud sound of an explosion, as if a volcano erupted, resounded and a large black cloud appeared in the sky.

“What the hell is that?”

“That direction, that’s where Kurono and the others went to experiment, right?”

Even Vulcan and Irina, who were high ranked, were baffled by this.

“That means it’s due to a magic?”

“I think so, but.....”

The place where the supposed magic was used was approximately 1km away from here. To be able to see it even from here, the fact made the adventurers instantly shudder.

“.....what outrageous power.”

The black smoke kept on rising towards the sky.

The fact that this thick smoke, that could only been seen in cases of forest fires, was caused due to a single magic would have instilled fear in the hearts of adventurers, even those that have learnt attack magic.

“Flames, means it’s that gluttonous witch girl?”

“I think. I saw her magic once at Irz but it seems that was not her full power.”

“Kurono and that small fairy were already a weird combo, and now they also have a witch with outrageous firepower. What’s up with his crazy party?”

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There was not even a trace left of the crater made by Lily.

That’s because an even larger crater of about a 100m diameter has been created in front of me.

“.....Kurono, are you alright?”

“Yeah.”

Lily was still hugging me from the front. Her Oracle Field had also covered me inside it.

“Thanks for protecting me.”

“un, as long as you are fine.”

Yes, the moment Fiona used her ‘strongest magic’, Lily ran towards me and protected me.

The crater was created about 100m away from me but she must have done that to protect me from the shockwaves that were created.

The crater created by the giant explosion had almost reached in front of us.

If we had been inside the range—I really don’t want to think about it.

“.....How, was it?”

And the culprit who brought this giant destruction, Fiona turned towards us normally.

How was it? Isn't that obvious?

"Amazing Fiona! With this we can win against the Crusaders! Ha-ha-ha-ha!!!"

Yes, amazing, at least the power was amazing. This is far beyond my imagination.

To have displayed this level of power alone, she is an incredible magician.

Just how much of an idiot are the people in the republic to have let her go away?

Well whatever. Thanks to that I was able to meet Fiona. That too, at this timing when the Crusaders were approaching.

"I am happy that Fiona became our comrade. I'll have you use this power to its fullest."

Standing in front of her, I clearly gave words of acceptance.

"I see.....I'll work hard."

Her tri-cornered hat's visor bent down and hid Fiona's current expression.

Somehow, her answer didn't seem too energetic.

"n, you alright?"

"Sorry, when I use this magic——"

And just like that she fell on my chest.

"——I become unable to move for some time since I get tired."

This is the exact reverse of the time when I fought against the Crusaders in Irz and was saved by Fiona.

Just how she held me back then, I also decided to gently catch her in my arms.

"I see. Take rest then."

"Yes, I'll accept your offer."

It's a bit embarrassing but I continue talking for the time being.

"But still, if you fall after just one use then you'll have to think of the right time and place to use this."

"Yes, but Kurono-san please think that for me."

"Alright. I'll have you use it right when it counts the most."

As I simulated the battle with the crusaders in my mind, I held Fiona up in my arms.

Basically what you would call a 'princess carry'.

"Fuwaa!? Ku, Kurono-san, this posture is.....!"

"You can't move right? I'll carry you like this till the village so don't worry."

"That's not exactly the problem here....."

Fiona brought her hat even more in front of her face and hid herself.

Ah, could it be that she's thinking something like 'Don't touch a woman's body so casually!?' or something like that.....I did it with absolute good intentions but, did I go too far?

"Should I put you down?"

"That's not it.....no, then quickly take me to the village please."

"Ou, leave it me!"

Let's go then, the moment I thought that, a small impact came from my back.

"Kurono, I can't move either so carry me." (lily)

"Li, Lily?"

As I turned to look back,

"Carry me as well."

Lily asked me while smiling cutely as usual.

But I can tell, her eyes aren't laughing, actually, they are scary.

"n, no, Lily, weren't you energetic just——"

"I'm tired. My fatigue came in just now, so carry me, and hold me. Doing it just for Fiona is not fair."

".....got it."

I don't think I can go against it.

At the end, I worked hard to walk to Alsace village 1 km away while completely carrying both Lily and Fiona.

And, needless to say, all the adventurers greeted us with a warm gaze without saying anything.

CHAPTER 99

THE NATSUGOSHI FESTIVAL (1)

Normally, the Natsugoshi Festival was held on the 30th of Shinyou but we still continued with our preparations—or so I thought.

“Wha, what the hell is this.....?”

As I returned from the construction site of the protective wall by evening, the lobby of the guild was filled with lantern-like decorations and the dull guild hall looked like a festival ground now.

This is strange. When I left the lobby during the morning, it was the same as usual but was it decorated while I was out?”

“Ou, you’re back Kurono.”

“Vulcan, what’s going——- What the hell is up with your getup!?!”

It was Vulcan who appeared first but currently he was wearing a Happi coat over his large frame and a headband on his wolf head.(T/N: Google happi coat. You’ll recognize it from animes.)

By the way, on the back of the happi coat, the character for [Summer/Natsu] was painted on it.

“Well that’s obviously because the Natsugoshi festival is today. C’mon hurry up and change quickly. Everyone’s waitin for ya.”

Vulcan looked at me as if I asked something stupid and handed me a set of happi coat and headband.

I didn’t hear anything about this. Neither did I hear anything about the fact that we were celebrating the festival nor did anyone told me that the dress is an almost traced copy of what the Japanese wore during festivals. If there was a fundoshi to go along with it, it would have been similar enough to make a claim in court and win!

“Why are you making such a face? The enemy is currently focused on occupying the Vato village. They won’t come here today.”

“Is, is that so——“

Certainly, as per the reports of the scouts, the enemy won’t be here by the speed with which they are advancing.

Then tonight, it might be nice to actually enjoy the festival, no, looking at the hopeful eyes of the adventurers in the lobby, I really don’t have the option to deny them.

“——alright.”

I took off my trademark black robe and the shirt beneath it and put on the happi coat.

I fired myself up as I tightened my headband, yeah, I’m already in a total festive mood!

“Alright! Let’s do this tonight!!”

“Ou, that’s the spirit Kurono! C’mon, go and quickly raise the cheers!”

I took the sake cup prepared by Vulcan and moved towards the middle of the lobby. Everyone already had a sake cup in their hands and were waiting to put it to their lips.

This atmosphere, I don’t need to give any long speech, just one word is needed. I lifted my cup and shouted,

“Cheers!!”

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Now that I think about it, it’s the first time that all the adventurers are partying together like this. On the day the alliance was formed, we did go drinking in the Kuar village but at that time only the adventurers of Kuar were present and the number of adventurers was much less.

I needed to use this chance to increase my friendship with the adventurers. I went around making courtesy calls around the big table and was busy left and right.

Well considering that we have been working together for so many days, all of them had already become my acquaintances.

“hee, how hardworking.”(Vulcan)

At the end Vulcan said that to me as I returned to my seat.

“It is important, you know?”(kuroono)

I wonder if only I think that since I am a Japanese?

Well it’s fine, now that I am done greeting everyone, I can finally sit down and eat some food.

“Oh right, where are Lily and Fiona?”

They were at the table during the toast but did they go away to have some girl’s talk with female adventurers?

“She’ll be back soon, well, you can increase the friendship among your own party now.”

Saying that, Vulcan stood up and left towards another table.

“Well, that’s how it is so I’ll also take my leave.”(mossan)

After Vulcan, Mossan also left towards another table.

“Wh, What’s going on??.....”

I had various doubts but I was the only one left on the table.

Eh, what, could it be that I’m being avoided?

Just when my heart was about to start aching,

“Kuroono!!”

“Kurono-san.....”

The ones who appeared were Lily and Fiona, the members of my party.

Why the hell is Lily in her normal bishoujo form? It's not the full moon today, no, that's not it, the most surprising point isn't that.

“Wh, Wha, What the hell is that costume!?!”

That costume, if I had to use one word, it would be – Bunny girl.

The two girls were currently clad in black cloth that was like a swimsuit and it covered only half of their chests and their legs were fully visible.

I don't know how but on their heads, two fluffy bunny ears were attached. Yup, it's definitely a bunny girl.

“Does it look good?”(lily)

“.....how is it?”(Fiona)

Lily who had absolute confidence and Fiona's eyes were swimming here and there and her cheeks were dyed red with embarrassment.

If you were embarrassed then don't force yourself, is what I was thinking, but seeing Fiona's super rare expression worth 1000 gold coins, I decided to change my thoughts.

I was well aware that Lily was beautiful enough to possess 'Charm' but Fiona who looked shy standing along with her was almost equally comparable.

“It, It suits you, yeah.”

I had already been charmed by the two but somehow I gave a reply.

“ufufu that's good.”(lily)

With a wide smile, she walked towards me and as if she was still in her child form, she sat on my lap like it was normal.

“Uoh, wait, Lily!?”

“nn, what is it Kurono?”

As she sat sideways on my lap, her bare legs fully came into my view as she crossed her legs and at the same time both of her hands locked around my neck.

Dangerous, her face is too close. No her body that touching me is even more dangerous.

I shouldn't have removed my undershirt as well. Her body touching directly my skin is too dangerous! It's not at a level a high school boy can tolerate.

Calm down, don't lose control. Wasn't she completely naked the first time I saw her in this form during that full moon night? Compared to that, this much is no problem.

Bu, but still, for some reason her body isn't shining like a fairy at all and she looks totally like a normal woman.

What kind of trick is this? Is this also magic? Damn, Lily's extra magic is too convenient!

I stopped my useless thoughts and decided to somehow end this embarrassing yet happy situation.

“Mov, move away a bit Lily.”

“ufufu, nope!”

This conversation has happened before as well. Normal form Lily really is in a rebellious stage. This 32yr old, isn't her rebellious stage coming a bit too late!?

“Look, I can't eat like this.”(kurono)

“It's fine. I help you eat veeery nicely.”

Those emerald eyes shined mischievously towards me. Somehow it feels the same as looking at a prey. Basically, I have no way to run away now.

“Ah, um, that’s, how should I say, embarrassing. People are looking as well.”

“eeh, it can’t be helped, then ——“

Lily gave a devilish smile.

“I’ll let you go if you kiss me here.”

She said that as she showed her cheek to me that became slightly red.

“Are, are you serious Lily?.....”

“fufu, let’s test whether it’s a joke or not, Kurono.”

As she said that, Lily closed her eyes and turned her head away. If I move even a little bit forwards my lips would reach her cheek.

“C’mon, be fast, even I’m a bit embarrassed.”(lily)

Is what she said, but her voice sounds totally composed to me.

Kuh, now I feel stupid to be the only one worrying too much. I don’t know whether Lily’s either drunk or joking or teasing me or serious but I’m not gonna hesitate from just a kiss on the cheek, or I’ll be an embarrassment as a man.

Well I did call it ‘just a kiss’ but this is the first time for me to have kissed a woman on her cheek.

“eei, here I go!”

The moment I resolved myself, before I could feel a soft sensation on my lips,

“Uoh! So bright!!?”

A bright white light struck my eyes.

“Wha, what the hell! I was surprised!?!”

Damn it! As I thought that, my eyes recovered from the whiteout.

“nn, hurry up and kiss me.”

As I lowered my sight, instead of the Lily who was erotically showing me her cheek, the child lily was sitting on my lap now.

“yes yes, kiss on the cheek, right?”(kuroono)

Without thinking anything else, without any problem or reluctance, I lifted the small Lily in my arms and put my lips on her round cheek.

“Kya!!”

Lily twisted around with embarrassment. She really is cute! Yup, Lily should be like that always.

“Now, go sit on your seat properly ‘kay?”(kuroono)

“Ye-s!”

With a lovestruck (dere dere) happy expression, the child Lily sat down on the seat right of me.

Her bunny girl outfit had fallen down since her body became small but her bunny ears were still in place.

Lily returned to her nostalgic fully nude body that was gently covered with the shining white light unique to the fairies.

“fuu, I feel tired suddenly.”(kuroono)

“Too bad for Lily-san though.”(Fiona)

Before I realized, Fiona had sat down on my left. Of course she’s still in her bunny outfit but she already had stacked up plates filled with meat in front of her as usual.

Maybe because she saw my and Lily’s embarrassing exchange so closely, she had already returned to her usual cool expression.

“.....Fiona won’t ask for a kiss as well, right?”(kuroono)

“Do you want me to?”(Fiona)

“Sounds really fascinating but I’ll be troubled if you ask right now.”

“Then, as a replacement, I’ll help you eat.”

Due to that sudden reply, I was surprised.

“Eh, seriously?”

“No need to hold back, this is a special service after all.”

Special service? Because it’s a festival? In the first place, I still don’t know the reason behind the bunny outfit.....

“Then here, Aah~n.”

Disregarding my doubts, Fiona presented the dish to me in her own pace.

The thing brought in front of me was a mysterious meat with gravy, no it should be dortoth’s meat, I ate it a long time ago back in the Irz village guild.

“Say aah~n, aah~~~~~n.”

“Alright, alright, I get it. I’ll eat it now so don’t rush me so much!”

She isn’t even giving me time to reminisce about that time. I bit into the meat in front of me.

“Un, tasty, the mysterious——dortoth meat is really tasty.”

“I see.”

Fiona once again stabbed the juicy dortoth meat with a fork. I once again opened my mouth and wait to be fed, but,

“omnomnom——it really is tasty.”(Fiona)

“Weren’t you going to feed me!?!”

Now I feel stupid to have opened my mouth like that!

“I gave you one bite, isn’t that enough?”

She implied that all the rest was for her only and started eating the meat at high speed.

“no, yeah, I was stupid to have expected anything.....”(kuroono)

Fiona’s service time ended very quickly and she was now inside her own world of tasty foods.

“Kuroono, Aah~n!”

The voice that came from my right was that of an Angel, no, of a beautiful fairy.

Holding the fork with her small hands, she presented the food towards me.

“uu, thank you, Lily.....”

The taste of the food inside my mouth, I felt, was even tastier than normal. Affection is a really amazing thing.

CHAPTER 100

THE NATSUGOSHI FESTIVAL (2)

And after this and that and chatting and laughing with Lily and eating my meal, I once again decided to pull out this topic.

“By the way, just what is that costume?”

“Eh?”

‘Is there something weird about it?’ Fiona looked at me as if she really didn’t know what I was saying.

Could it be that she has already forgotten what getup she’s in right now because she’s always wearing a witch’s robe?

“aa, are you talking about this?”

After looking at my face and her own body about 3 times, she finally understood.

“It is apparently a traditional costume worn by young women in this area.”

Bunny girl is? That is a very lewd tradition, I must say.

“It’s meant to be worn at ‘critical times’.”

What kind of time is that?

“Lily-san said that I should use this opportunity to wear these clothes and give Kurono-san some service as thanks.”(Fiona)

“Is that so?”

“Yes.”

Fiona said that brimming with confidence. Where did the embarrassment when she came first go? She is making a face that has no regrets.

Well, I can't say that I am not happy but, it can't be helped since it was too abrupt. To appear in a bunny outfit out of nowhere and then tell me that it's the traditional costume here is something I could never even imagine.

"un, but really thank you."

"don't mind it."

I honestly gave her my thanks. Lifting Lily on my lap, I patted her silky soft hair.

"Thanks Lily. It made me happy."

"ehehe."

She seemed embarrassed but she smiled happily. Damn, my Lily's so damn cute that it's dangerous.

"But—"

As I looked back towards Fiona, I once again thought that the costume was really amazing.

I understand that wearing such an outfit just to thank me is really impressive (?) but, that doesn't change the fact that the amount of body exposure is really stimulating.

And since she is usually in that witch robe, let alone body, even her body line is barely visible. Due to the hentai synergy caused when someone/something who is usually hidden becomes so exposed, the level of impact I received is immeasurable.

Besides, Fiona's face is so high levelled that it doesn't get overshadowed even with Lily around. In terms of Adventurer rank it would definitely be rank 5.

Golden eyes that were as bright as the sun along with light blue short hair, from the pov of a Japanese, it might be strange and magical, but somehow amazingly, it perfectly suits her.

Although her body doesn't glitter, I could see her transparent-like white shoulders and legs.

Fiona who was bodily older than Lily had the proper curves where it counts, and her womanly roundness could be seen right now. Due to the bunny outfit, her curvy waist, that was emphasized, could make any woman jealous. Even more so because she is always eating no matter what time of the day.

“Is something wrong, Kurono-san?”

Her golden eyes came in between my impolite gaze. The fact that actually only doubt could be seen in her eyes actually made me feel sorry.

“sorry, it’s nothing—it hurts!!”

Is what I say, but the damage isn’t much.

As a slight pain ran through my fingertip, I saw Lily biting on my finger while giving a slight reproachful look.

“uu!”

“ah, sorry sorry, it was my bad so let my finger go.”

“hmp.”

Lily puffed her cheeks and looked away. This is bad, she must have read my indecent thoughts while looking at the bunny girl Fiona.

“Really sorry.”

Even though she was angry, she still sat on my lap as usual. She’s like a selfish cat in a sense. Then, here, I’ll need to pat her gently and cheer her up.

“Kurono-san.”

“nn?”

While patting Lily, I turned to talk back to Fiona.

“Please keep on being affectionate like that to Lily-san. She really was excited to show Kurono-san this outfit.”

Well now, I'm embarrassed as well as happy. This really is a heart-warming episode; it really made my heart flutter a bit.

"I see, thanks Lily!"

"Kya Kya!"

I patted her with even more vigour and affection than usual.

Maybe because she felt my warm feelings as well, Lily seemed to be in an even higher tension than usual.

"But you two really have gotten close."(kuroono)

"We have been making potions together all this time after all. To make her miracle drug, she had to return to her normal form today as well. That's why she could stay like that in front of Kuroono-san only for a few minutes."

"Aa, so that's why she suddenly reverted back."

Certainly, Lily can only take her normal form for only 30 mins through the Queen Beryl and she used those last few minutes to stay with me.

Somehow, I suddenly feel regret that I wasn't able to properly kiss the adult Lily.

"Since she used all her strength, until she sleeps the whole night, she won't be able to turn back her consciousness either."

"I see. You really worked hard Lily."

Lily twisted her body in embarrassment while sitting on my lap.

"Also, the reason why only 3 of us were left alone together was because Lily-san said that she wanted to increase the friendship among the members of [Element Master].

"oh, so that's why everyone left their seats here."

Unexpectedly, everyone's pretty sensitive and tactful. While admiring, I also gave my thanks to the adventurers who could read the atmosphere.

“By the way, what exactly do we have to do to deepen our friendship?”(kuroono)

“Even I don’t know that. I don’t have any experience from the time when I was a student either.”(Fiona)

Fiona suddenly confessed something extremely saddening.

“Um, should I not touch anything regarding your school days?”(kuroono)

“I don’t really mind. I was able to graduate even while being completely alone after all.”(fiona)

Uwaa, I just heard something even sadder. Her friends were definitely 0. Even I didn’t have many friends but it wasn’t this bad.

Just because she could destroy even a dungeon with her overpowered dangerous attack magic, there wasn’t any need to avoid her either. But the person himself doesn’t seem to mind it much either, but that makes it even sadder.....

“Alright, let’s drink a lot tonight Fiona!”

To drink away your bad memories with alcohol is what adults do. Though I don’t really have any experience since I was still a minor back in japan.

But after coming here, I have developed a taste for it.

“But I’m already drinking though.”(Fiona)

“It’s fine. It’s the feelings that count. Now then, to deepen the friendship among the members of [Element Master], Cheers!”

“Cheers.”

“Cheers!!”

The 3 glasses struck each other.

Now then, what should I talk about? If I go by the current flow, I feel like I would end up asking something tasteless so I should be careful.

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Late at night, I climbed the stairs of the guild with the heavily sleeping Lily in my hands.

I just separated from Fiona. We drank quite a lot but maybe because of having high alcohol resistance, she was only a bit tipsy and so should be able to sleep well tonight.

On the other hand, I, thanks to my modified body, I could safely climb the stairs and could walk without stumbling.

I thought of going back to my room, but before that I need to enter a different room.

“I’m coming in, Simon”

“Ah, Onii-san.”

It was Simon’s room. To help give him space for research and development, he had two rooms with the wall in between broken down.

In the centre of the room, Simon was sitting while wearing a white robe.

“Sorry that only we had been partying and racketing till now. Was it too noisy?”

“It’s fine. I don’t really like things like that and I can’t drink sake either. And the noise wasn’t really disturbing either. I’m the type who becomes unable to listen anything else when I concentrate.”

After adjusting the gun in his hand, Simon turned towards me.

I could see fatigue on that cute face.

After we met, he has been reducing his sleep to work more.

And his job wasn’t just development. I was actually worried that he might be working harder than even me.

“But, are alchemists knowledgeable even with magic?”

Simon gave a wry smile and answered.

“I have only dabbled in the working and techniques of it. I can’t really use magic with a magic circle or a chant.”

That’s why, I can’t even use even the simplest of magics. He said to himself with a self depreciating smile.

“But thanks to that, the machine gun has been completed.”(kuroono)

“Well yeah, I feel glad that I actually remembered the techniques of magic.”(simon)

It must have been painful and bitter to have learnt something you could not even use.

Not to mention that many others could easily use the same skills. It must have felt stupid to be learning something like that.

But now’s not the time to be thinking about such stuff. So I decide to change the topic.

“a, should I have brought something for you to eat?”(kuroono)

“I’m fine. Just now, well, some time ago Su-san brought lots of things for me.”(simon)

“I see. Good to see you’re getting along.”

Simon gave a small nod and pulled a chair for me and asked if I wanted to sit.

“Nah, I just came to look so I’ll go now. Simon, you should also sleep tonight.”(kuroono)

It was already midnight. It wasn’t good to stay up for so long all the time.

“un, but—“

“No need to overwork yourself. I’ll be troubled if you collapsed.”

“I see, yeah, then I’ll go to sleep now.”

“yeah, you should do that.”

Turning my back to Simon, I moved towards the exit door.

“.....Probably tomorrow..”(simon0

As to what he meant, I didn't even need to ask.

I stopped my legs and I answered with a question.

“Yeah, you scared?”(kuroono)

“No, these past few days, I really had fun. I got a lot of ideas from Onii-san that I could have never come up with. Also, Onii-san's the only one who has ever depended on me so much, so, I was really happy.”

“I see—-After this is over, I have many things I want you to create.”

“Yeah, I'm looking forward to it as well.”

There was no need to speak anything else.

“Bye, good night.”

“yeah, Good night.”

I quietly left Simon's room.

“Tomorrow——-“

I muttered softly.

Today's merrymaking done with Natsugoshi festival as an excuse really helped in lowering the tension of the upcoming battle.

But, today, on the 30th of Shinyou, I should have been in Irz right now.

I promised to treat Nyarko to a drink, I was supposed to visit stalls with Lily, I would have laughed while seeing the incompetent Nino, I would have been extorted by Aten under the guise of our promise as well.

But, none of those will come true anymore.

But no matter how sad, painful, bitter it was—no tears will flow out of my eyes any more.

In front of the graves of everyone, I have already cried enough.

From here on out, there's only one thing I have to do.

“—Watch over me. I'll kill them, I'll kill them all. No matter how many of them may come.”

I'll kill as many as I can of those Crusaders.

In this Alsace's defensive battle, I'll make you bastards compensate for your crimes with your blood.

CHAPTER 101

THE BLACK BUILDING (BLACK BOX)

The next day, on the 1st day of the month of Hatsuhi (new flame), inside the conference room of the guild that had become as dark as the night itself through Kurono's blackening, all the representative members of The Adventurer Alliance had gathered together.

"Firstly, let's hear the reports. Was the MPK tactic in Vato village also broke through?"(kurono)

"Yes, the priest who is probably also the commander of the army killed the Garuda."

On Kurono's question, Irina, the representative of the scout squad gave her report.

"Garuda was able to damage the infantry a lot but unfortunately it was unable to hurt much of the heavy armoured knights or the Pegasus knights. The Priest who uses light and earth magic led the vanguard himself and killed all the monsters in Vato village."(irina)

"I see, so the result wasn't good even after making them face a rank 4 Garuda."(kurono)

"What, does that mean that this MPK tactic failed?"(Vulcan)

Vulcan, who was also a part of the MPK tactic, was currently sitting cramped in his sit due to his giant 2 meter body.

"If it was able to reduce even a little of their strength, then it was a success. Since we don't have the exact numbers of how many of them got killed or injured, you might not realize it though. Also, the main gain was that we were able to delay them from the expected 3 day time till today."

Thanks to that, they were able to finish up a lot more preparation than they could have in only 3 days.

Kurono and the others didn't know how much effect the scorched earth and MPK tactics had caused on the Crusaders but the fact that the enemy had taken 1 week to reach here was important.

"I hope you have once again become aware of the fact that the enemies can take down even a rank 4 garuda easily. Do not underestimate them just because they are an army of only humans."

Through the reports of the scout troops, the equipment, appearance and other such things about the enemy had been told to the adventurers but if they know that the enemy could even kill a high ranked monster they would be able to understand the enemy's strength even better.

Although, due to the hectic preparations, all of them here had a sense of tension and won't be careless against the human opponents.

"In the end, just what the hell was Em Pii Kay?" (T/N: Vulcan obviously doesn't know how to write MPK here since it's a game slang)

"Eh, I didn't tell?" (kurono)

"You didn't!!" (Vulcan)

Vulcan gave a roar.

"I don't think you'd understand even if I told you though. Monster Player Killer. By taking the letters used at my home, the initials would be MPK."

"Haa?"

"It is a tactic that involves using 'Monsters' to kill 'Players'. No need to think too deeply into it since there's no other meaning to it."

In the first place, MPK was a type of prank (?) used in a net game that Kurono played in his own world.

Since in that game, players couldn't attack players, there was no way for one player to kill another.

But using the traits of Active Monsters that would attack the player as long as it entered their range, they could make many monsters target themselves. And they would move towards another player who might be in a different battle or was afk while taking a break. And then that player would teleport away from the place and the monsters would end up attacking the player remaining there. And as a result, they would be killed.

By the way, one of Kurono's friends was an expert at MPK.

Anyway, MPK tactic was a tactic influenced and adapted from such a useless game and was used to lure wild monsters and make them attack the Crusaders.

To lure the children of monsters might sound like an inhumane tactic, but luring monsters and using them as decoy wasn't problematic for the adventurers who would take any method to complete a quest. At least, it wasn't something like a taboo that might have made Vulcan and the others doubt Kurono's character and nature.

At the same time, the adventurers that kidnapped the monster children (or eggs) were made to wear the costume of Crusaders to make the enraged monster possess clear hostility towards the Crusaders that came to the village.

"The important part starts from here onwards. If the Crusaders have occupied Vato village, then that means that they will definitely come and attack this place by tomorrow."(kurono)

On Kurono's words, the adventurers realized that the decisive battle was nearing close and a sense of tension hung inside the room.

"Just now, a few enemy scouts had appeared nearby the village. The enemy will be aware that we are preparing to counter attack and are lying in wait here."(irina)

Kurono gave a slight nod to Irina's report and continued speaking.

"Probably, no, definitely, the Crusaders will attack Alsace village tomorrow morning. Bean-san, how much has the construction been completed?"

Alsace's guild master Bean, who had been appointed as in charge of the construction and fortifications, cleared his throat once with a *uohon* and began his report.

“Defences have been prepared as much as we could. Thanks to the iron barbed wires, the infantry will not have it easy invading this place, but stopping the Pegasus knights and the heavy armoured knights will be the job for you guys.”

“That’s enough. We’ll stop both of those definitely.”

On Kurono’s strong reassuring answer, bean gave a hearty laugh and said that he will be depending on him.

“oo, also, the installation for that was also finished earlier.”

“By that, you mean the giant Ballista?”

In Kurono’s mind he remembered the big wagon pulled by the dwarves that was carrying the ballista that was the same ones as those on the walls of Daedalus.

“For the time being I have positioned it at the main gate so use it well.”

Kurono didn’t know from where he got something like that but Kurono decided that it would be insensitive of him to ask something like that and decided to just accept it gratefully.

“Thanks for the fantastic romantic weapon, Bean-san.”(T/N: By romance, here Kurono is referring to a man’s romance involving cool thing etc. and not the usual one.)

“What, it’s fine! Use it till it turns to waste in this battle.”

Leaving its history aside, Kurono was happy for the increase in their firepower.

He wasn’t expecting the completion of ballista on time so it was an unexpected gain but he also asked for the increase in firepower that he was expecting, that is, the[Machine gun].

“How is on Simon’s side?”(kurono)

“Ye, Yes!”

Maybe because a lot of adventurers had gathered here, Simon stood up with a nervous expression.

All gazes focused on him, and among them,

“uu..”

Lily’s hostility filled gaze was also included.

“Um, Onii-san.”

“What happened?”

“Somehow, Lily-san seems to be glaring at me.....”

“He, Hey Lily, are you still minding that!?”

“uu!!”

Seeing Lily puff up her cheeks, Kurono recalled Lily and Simon’s first meeting.

Destroying the door of the lab (storehouse), Lily walked towards Simon with max magical energy and Kurono tried to frantically stop her.

After that event, even in her child form, Lily seems to be hostile, or rather vigilant, towards Simon.

Kurono didn’t understand why Lily, who was gentle with everyone, was so severe only against Simon but he had been trying to mediate between those two, although any good result was yet to be seen.

“Sorry, continue.”(kurono)

Kurono who put Lily on his lap made an awkward expression and asked Simon to continue.

“Ah, yeah, um, for the time being, the machine gun has been completed. All that’s left is see how many barrel replacements and bullets we can procure.”(simon)

“Good job. I’ll create the bullets. As for the gun barrels, we have very few replacements so now choice but to use magic to cool it down and use them.”

In fact it was amazing, that the machine gun was completed in just one week.

“Un, as expected, we don’t have the time to create a cooling mechanism starting from now.”(simon)

“It’s enough. If we have even 2 machineguns, we can definitely stop the enemy’s advance. Mossan, you have learnt how to use the machinegun right?”

“Ou, leave to me!”

Mozrun gave a confident thumbs up. As expected of a rank 4 adventurer, he was always in a good form, so Kurono judged that he should be fine.

“Alright—”

After that, Kurono heard the reports regarding supply and replenishments and the arrangement and deployment of the members. At last he said this,

“Finally, tomorrow the enemy will come here. Since we only had a week, our defensive line had to be created in a hurry but right now, we have no choice but to endure it by ourselves.”

The last batch of refugees, that is Bean-san and others would depart today. If the enemy breaks through in 1 or 2 days all the refugees will definitely perish.

“We need to hold off the enemy here for at least 1 week. It’ll be a painful and hard battle but everyone’s life depends on us. Fight with all you’ve got!”

Kurono spoke determined words. It was unknown what the other adventurers were thinking inside their minds.

“Fight on! O!Ou!”

Lily raised her small fist and shouted.

“Ou.”

Fiona also continued after Lily with her usual expressionless face, and the next moment,

“OUU!!!”

“OOO!!!”

“OOH!!”

Every adventurer here stood up and raised a war cry.

The roaring sounds of the adventurers resounded inside the guild and their wills became one.

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2nd of Hatsuhi, from beyond the Rone river, that was slightly covered with mist, an white army wearing the flag of the Cross finally appeared.

“Is that it——”

The one leading the vanguard of the west Daedalus occupation troops was the devout believer of the Cross, Norz Preist Head.

“It’s as per the reports. The guild building seems to have been enhanced and fortified through magic.”

The one who answered was his subordinate beside him.

“I see. I see now why the scout troops had given it the nickname ‘Black Box’. What an ominous and sinister dark building it is.”

The forest alongside the highway became thinner and the banks of the Rone river spread here. On the river, a single bridge leading to Alsace village existed.

Beyond that, as if reject any intruders, a fence of wood and bush like fence of iron wires had been created.

And close beside the main gate was the ominous black building of the guild.

“But, in the end, it’s all just for show.”

Norz felt no fear against the demons that were lying in wait for them.

No matter how many the demons have gathered, they will not be more than 300. It was a number that could not even be compared with his own troops.

With such an overwhelming difference in numbers and strength, he only needed to charge straight and break through the enemy defences with sheer numbers.

Due to the rivers, it would be difficult to complete an encirclement considering the terrain. Even if they were able to successfully surround them somehow, it would take a lot of time.

If they take too much time, they'll end up letting the demons run away. So in the first place, they could not take a detour to cross over the rivers like usual.

Also, the cavalry is needed for pursuing the enemy so they are not normally used in attacking.

Though they had such 'constraints' , and even if the demons were not just 300 something, just with their heavy armour knights and Pegasus knights, they could easily destroy the hurriedly made defences of the demons easily.

Norz who was confident of his victory, gave the long awaited words.

“Commence attack!!”

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But fortunately, he still doesn't know.

That the hatred Kurono has for the Crusaders, his knowledge of the modern world, and the fortified guild and the Alsace defensive line would become a kill zone that bring out countless sacrifices and deaths to them.

And thus, the battle where blood was washed with blood, between the Adventurer Alliance and the Crusaders, finally began.

